THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

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N.B.—All the names and characters mentioned in the stories in THE ROYAL MAGAZINE are purely imaginary.

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In our issue for May a statement appeared to the effect that a German proprietor of a boarding house in Sheringham had arranged when the enemy made a raid "to give certain assistance." We very much regret that Mr. J. Lichters, of Sheringham, has been caused considerable annoyance and inconvenience on account of this statement, which so far as Mr. Lichters is concerned is without foundation, nor is there any foundation for the suggestion that Sheringham had been selected as a suitable spot to effect a landing

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Photo *Elvin Neame.*

A CHARMING DAY FOR YOU!

Turn to Page 195, where Miss Iris Hoey, the pretty and talented young actress, tells you how to spend a charming day, and gives you glimpses of herself in the act of spending one.

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Photo *Elsie Neame.*

The afternoon always invites laziness. Miss Hoey yields to its spell by putting on a simple, appealing frock, and enjoying a thorough rest.

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"Do Have a Charming Day"

By Iris Hoey

As soon as I wake in the morning I me back on the pillows and revel in the fact that my perfect day has arrived.

There is no doubt that the strain and stress of war-time tell more heavily on women than on men. The problem of how to lighten them I put before Miss Iris Hoey, one of our hardest-worked and most popular actresses, and she has solved it in a most sane and practical manner. She gives the solution in the following article, illustrated from delightful photographs of herself.—Ed. R.M.

In the first place, in case anyone might think me conceited, I should like to say that in order to feel charming one need not necessarily look charming. Of course, every woman naturally makes the best she can of her appearance, because doing so has a soothing effect on the nerves, but this is only one step on the road towards feeling charming.

In these times of war and stress the strain tells heavily on everyone, particularly on women. Those of us who work feel it additionally, and, for myself, after a week of eight performances, I am often almost ready to drop. Anxiety enters into one with the very air one breathes, and it seems absolutely indecent to go on playing games and enjoying the ordinary relaxations of peace-time while our best and bravest are dying at the Front.

However, we can't work all the time, and moping does no good, so the question has to be faced:

"How can women keep cheerful, calm-nerved, and optimistic when all frivolous recreations are barred simply as a matter of good taste?"

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A glance in the mirror to assure myself no wrinkles have arrived during the night—

I think perhaps I have solved the problem by indulging periodically in what I call my "charming day."

Each one must decide for herself how often the day ought to come round, but once a fortnight is perhaps a good rule. And the recipe for a charming day is simple. It consists in doing all the quiet, restful things one likes best to do, and putting aside life's worries and troubles altogether for twenty-four hours.

I do not think anyone can call this a selfish procedure, for pleasing herself does no one harm once in a way as long as it is not at the expense of inconvenience to others. And I am sure no one would want to enjoy a charming day in the spirit of the little girl in the story who insisted on taking all the toys away from her little sister.

"You shouldn't do that, Elsie darling!" reproved their mother. "It is not at all nice for Muriel to be robbed of all her playthings."

"Yes, mother," replied Elsie, "but it's nice for me to have them, and my nice isn't the same as her nice!"

Perhaps I should explain my idea better if I were to give some sort of outline of my own charming day.

As soon as I wake in the morning I lie back on the pillows and tell myself that the day of peace has arrived, and that for the time being work, worries, and bothers don't exist. Then I get up, glance in the mirror,

Photos *Elsie Sumo.*

—then I stretch myself luxuriously before making tracks for the bathroom.

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tell myself joyfully that no wrinkles have arrived during the night, and stretch luxuriously.

The next thing to do is to enjoy a warm, scenty bath. A bath, you know, is a very luxurious and beautiful thing, not to be hurried over. I like to sit on the edge, watch the water running, and anticipate the delights of the actual splash.

After bath comes breakfast. According to my mood, I take breakfast dressed for the morning or in a *negligée*. The great secret of a charming day is to indulge one's moods to the full, for such an opportunity occurs seldom, and should be enjoyed as thoroughly as possible.

The delight of the morning's post comes next. Only open the attractive-looking letters, and leave anything that has the appearance of a bill till the day after. If you love letters as I do, try to arrange your charming day for a date when you expect a large post. Letters are a great joy to me, and I get heaps of jolly ones from all

No one enjoys the morning bath more thoroughly than I do. A warm and scenty one is my choice.

I like to sit on the edge, and anticipate the delights of the actual splash.

Photos *Lévin Nouma.*

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sorts of dear people who have seen me act, and often from schoolboys, who write most cheerily.

Sometimes I saunter out of doors when the post is exhausted, or put on a cap and sports coat and play golf. In any case I never miss a romp with Mascot, my black Pekingese, who is a most charming person apart from the fact that black Pekingese are very priceless possessions.

The afternoon should be approached with tact, for afternoons are apt to provide anti-climaxes unless carefully handled. One has lost the stark vigour of the morning, and the more subtle joys of evening have not yet arrived.

So in the afternoon I get into a little, simple, appealing frock, and rest. The great point about an afternoon is that it invites laziness. With a little manœuvring a pleasant caller or two may be arranged for, and tea is always a wonderfully attractive function for a woman.

I think, perhaps, I enjoy the evening of my charming day most. In the evening one puts on the most attractive gown in the wardrobe and comes down, or goes out, to dinner with a delightful sensation that, having done the best for oneself in the way of clothes, the rest is certain to be attractive. Besides, a woman, once inside her dinner-gown, always feels, I think, a delicious sense of irresponsibility. The breath of remote triumphant conquest, purely imaginary of course, seems to fan her cheek.

"Did I not sing to thee in Babylon,
Or did we set a sail in Carthage Bay?"

her heart murmurs to the stout and common-place fellow guest who sits next her. It is all very foolish and pleasant.

I like to suit my evening toilette to my feelings of the moment. If I am in a stately mood nothing appeals to me like the solemn, rich folds of

The morning post plays a large part in my charming day, for I love letters and get heaps of jolly ones from people who have seen me act.

Photos Elwin Neame.

Mascot, my precious black Pekingese. always comes in for a lot of attention in the morning. He's such splendid company.

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A little gossamer evening gown is the thing for a light-hearted mood—and who wouldn't be light-hearted after such a charming day?

Photo *Elvin Neame.*

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If I feel vigorously inclined I put on a cap and sports coat, and sally forth for a round of golf.

black velvet. On the other hand, for a light-hearted mood I choose a little gossamer gown, as merry as my spirits.

I do, sincerely, recommend all lady-readers of the *Royal* to try my plan of a charming day once every so often. As a cure for worry and depression, it is at once satisfactory and —an additional recommendation in these hard times—peculiarly inexpensive, for it costs nothing beyond a little scheming and forethought.

After all, every woman has many possessions to which she is attached; for we all, consciously or unconsciously, surround ourselves with what we like best, only in these days of hurry and rapid movement we are apt to forget them unless we pause for a moment periodically and take stock.

I always think that the American idea of Thanksgiving Day is very beautiful and appropriate. Perhaps it was that which put the idea of my own charming day into my head. I can only say that, wherever the inspiration originated, I am very grateful for it, because the result has been a great deal of pleasure and nerve rest.

Think of it—a whole day in which to do nothing but enjoy oneself peacefully! Don't rush about, whatever you do—nothing feverish like motoring or train journeys.

Just have a long, peaceful, lazy, happy day, and you'll be astonished at the amount of good it does you.

Photo *Davis Nicoll*

I like to suit my evening toilette to my feelings, so black velvet is my choice if I am in a stately mood.

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My LADY BEAUTIFUL

II.—THE BEAUTY BATH

By Mary Marsh

The following article—the second of a delightful series by a well-known beauty expert—will have a special appeal for all women who want to make the best of themselves, for it explains how Beauty Baths may be indulged in at home without incurring any great expense.

"Personal cleanliness plays so great a part in the achievement of good looks, that it occupies a foremost place amongst the many lessons that those who fain would become their own Beauty Doctors have to learn," remarked the Beauty Specialist sententiously.

He always began in this wise, but the Novice knew he would become more colloquial as time wore on, so she listened patiently as he continued:

"Indeed, the fact that all beauty comes through hygiene has been the elementary principle upon which we have all worked from time immemorial. For, as everyone who has ever studied the subject soon learns, top-dressings are of little or no use towards obtaining a white skin and a beautiful complexion, constant bathing and cleansing in the form of massage and steaming doing infinitely more to produce the desired effect than all the cosmetics and beauty lotions ever discovered."

"But I always wash my face," put in the Novice mildly. "I do it twice a day, and I never use make-up."

"It isn't only the face that demands such thorough cleansing, but the entire body, in order that the skin may clear itself of all impurities," went on the other, who was in the mood to lecture, and wouldn't be put off.

"Take, for instance, Beauty Baths, courses of which constitute the chief stock-in-trade of all the great Beauty Specialists, who never tire of testifying to the wonderful results such a treatment achieves in whitening and improving red, rough, and coarsened skins."

"Now you *are* getting interesting," said the girl. "I've always longed to have a Beauty Bath, but I never could afford the luxury. You might describe how it is done," and she settled down prepared to listen.

"All that you require is the knowledge of how to set about preparing and administering a bath of this description," said the Specialist, feeling more in sympathy with his pupil than ever before, and warming to his subject.

"Once you have mastered these details, you will soon understand that a course of baths of this description can be indulged in in any ordinary house, and they will be every whit as effectual as those administered at the cost of a guinea apiece in my sumptuously fitted Beauty Parlour, provided that you

will devote to them the same care and the same leisure as we specialists insist upon.

"For a Beauty Bath must *not* be hurried over. Twenty to thirty minutes is the minimum time to devote to it. Moreover, a bath of this description must never be taken cold, as, though chilly water may be counted invigorating and refreshing, it neither cleanses nor beautifies the skin.

"Another important detail is that, unless freshly caught rain-water is used, the water *must* be softened. This is best done by using a muslin bag filled with fine oatmeal and squeezing it into the water, or by taking a calico bag full of bran and starch and boiling it in the water—a simple remedy that whitens the skin in a wonderful way, particularly if the treatment is persisted in day in, day out, for a period of not less than six or twelve months."

"Wouldn't milk do as well?" interposed the Novice.

"Well, if neither of these means of softening water are at hand, a little milk added to hard water will be found to have a wonderfully softening effect," said her teacher. "Sweet-smelling bath salts may with advantage be added, or a little eau-de-Cologne poured in, but none of these water-softeners is really as good as pure, fresh rain-water.

"When the bath is ready, you should lie in it for several minutes, so as to allow the skin to get thoroughly soft, while more hot water should be added, little by little, as the bath begins to cool, an even temperature being essential.

"Having thoroughly softened the skin, the next thing to do is to soap the body all over, using only the very best and purest soap procurable, taking care that it contains no strong scent or any other ingredient likely to irritate a delicate skin."

"But how in the world am I to know whether soap is pure or not, when I can only judge by the outside?"

"It's easy enough," was the answer. "An excellent variety can be made by cutting up a cake of pure palm-oil soap and putting it into a porcelain jar, adding to it a quantity of very hot water, a little tincture of benzoine, and a few drops of pure glycerine. When the soap has been thoroughly dissolved, whisk it vigorously with a fibre brush, and then let it get cold before using."

"Yes," mused the perplexed girl, "but how am I to use it if it isn't in a cake? I can't pour it over myself."

"The best way is to use a very fine flannel or a piece of soft Turkish towelling; or perhaps better than either of these is the use of one of those large, soft soap-brushes or fibre whisks made especially for use in Turkish bath establishments. The special value of these whisks is that they produce a certain amount of healthy friction on the surface of the skin. They should be lightly used, however, care being taken that every part of the body receives its fair share of lathering."

All modern bath-rooms should be fitted with a soft-water shower, which can be turned on over the body for rinsing purposes.

"Oh, do wait until I've made a note of what I've got to get! A fibre whisk, I *think* you said? Do they sell them at the chemist's?"

"Yes," said her teacher impatiently, for he hated being interrupted. However, he quickly caught up the thread of his discourse, and went on as if nothing had occurred:

"The soaping process over, the next thing to do is to rinse the body thoroughly from head to foot, using for this purpose a large-sized and absolutely clean bath sponge, or if the bath-room be fitted—as all modern bath-rooms should be fitted—with a soft-water shower, this should be turned on over the body, the water used being as hot as can be borne in the first instance, and then gradually regulated until it is tepid.

"Drying is best done first with a warm Turkish bath towel of big proportions, the body being rubbed with considerable briskness to produce a healthy glow, and afterwards finished off with a soft towel.

Several Beauty Doctors follow this up by polishing the neck, chest, shoulders, and arms with a very fine chamois leather, rubbing the skin lightly and swiftly for two or three minutes, after first of all sprinkling it with a little pure toilet powder."

"I had no idea that a bath could be such an elaborate affair," put in the girl. "Why, it would take an hour, at least, by the time it was finished."

"Equally important is a knowledge of the right way to set about washing the face," said the Specialist, looking critically at his pupil, "a process by no means as simple as the majority of you amateurs imagine it to be. According to the highest authorities who have made a study of the complexion, the best method to adopt is as follows:

"Pin the hair well back from the brow and up from the neck. Then take a really big washing-basin filled with hot rain-water—this should be collected when fresh and stored ready for daily use, as nothing makes a complexion more beautiful than daily washing in pure rain-water.

"When this is ready, take a soft badger-hair shaving-brush, and rub it into some jellied soap made from the finest vegetable oil soap, and with this gently scrub the face, beginning with a short, rotary movement.

"This must be continued for ten minutes, by which time the entire face and throat should be thickly covered with lather, the brush having been constantly dipped and re-dipped into the soap during the process. The next step is to take another basin of rain-water, not quite so hot as the first, and using a Turkish face glove, wash the face free from any trace of soap. When this is done, refill the first basin with quite cold water, and with a clean sponge (a soft Turkish one for preference) deluge the face over and over again. Afterwards dry it very gently with a soft linen towel—the older the better."

"But is it really necessary to have so many waters?" ventured the girl. "I generally find one basinful is quite enough for my needs."

"The reason why several waters are required is that the hot water and soap help to free the skin of grease and impurities, the tepid water soothes it, and the final cold douche acts as a valuable astringent, hardening the tissues and closing the pores of the skin."

"Oh, well I suppose it doesn't matter—after all, you'd only wash your face like that once a week at the most."

"This process should be gone through every night before retiring to rest," said the Professor relentlessly. "You can't skimp a Beauty cure. When the washing process is finished, the face must be thinly smeared all over with a little cold cream, or dabbed lightly with a good skin food, which ought to be left on during the hours of sleep."

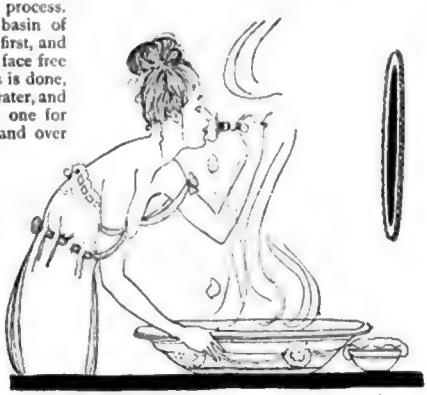
"Yes, that's where the expense comes in," said the girl. "You've no idea what a lot the smallest pot of skin food costs."

"Many kinds of reliable skin foods are now to be bought at a reasonable figure," said the Specialist, who looked upon the sale of them to make his profit, "but for those who like to make their own, nothing is better and more soothing than the old-fashioned 'Virginal Milk,' which is made by taking a quart of rose-water, and adding to it drop by drop an ounce of simple tincture of benzoine."

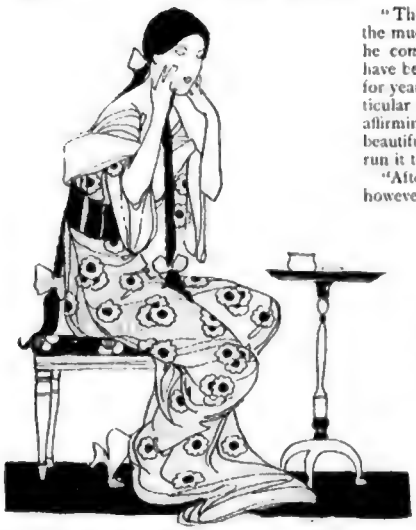
(After all, he thought, he was being paid highly for this course of instruction, and he could afford to throw in a few simple recipes.)

"This produces a mixture resembling milk, which is invaluable for softening the skin, and it may be used with impunity on the most sensitive complexion."

"Oh, well, that sounds cheap," said the girl. "But I must say I don't like the idea of scrubbing my face with a shaving-brush like a man."



A soft badger-hair shaving-brush and jellied soap are invaluable for cleansing the face, which must be scrubbed gently with a short, rotary movement.



One lesson from an expert is quite enough to enable the novice to do her own massaging, but it must be lightly performed with the two first fingers of either hand.

"The question of cold cream brings me to the much-debated question of face massage," he continued blandly, "the merits of which have been argued over by Beauty Specialists for years past, some declaring that this particular treatment is highly beneficial, others affirming that although massage may produce beautiful results in the first instance, in the long run it tends to loosen and wrinkle the skin.

"After several years of general use, it would, however, appear to have been amply demonstrated that massage, if sparingly resorted to and lightly performed, does prove a valuable asset not only in retaining the contour of youth, but also in eliminating and softening wrinkles and other facial blemishes. What few of you amateurs realise is that face massage can be learnt and safely practised by the novice, the operation being by no means difficult to perform personally, but in every instance it is best to have at least one practical lesson from an expert before experimenting on oneself."

"As I can't have a practical lesson, perhaps you can put me up to a few wrinkles before I experiment," remarked the girl flippantly.

"The following hints should prove useful," said the Professor.

"First, cleanse your face very thoroughly, then smear the skin lightly over with a good astringent face cream, and then, dipping the two first fingers of either hand into the cream, set to work to massage.

"Begin with the forehead, which should be lightly rubbed upwards, starting from the eyebrows to the hair, and bringing the fingers outwards over the eyebrows. Next, the cheeks should be massaged. To do this, begin just below the eyes, and rub gently in the direction from the temples to the nose; then treat the lower part of the cheeks, adopting an upward movement from the chin to the centre of the ears, making the fingers describe a wide circle.

"The throat and chin are best massaged with an upward movement, which helps to make the flesh firm and to reduce any tendency to a double chin. The time required for this operation is about twenty minutes, and after it is over the face should be again washed, first in hot, then in tepid, water until the grease has been removed; after this, sprinkle a little face-powder over the face to cool and soothe it."

"I don't call that difficult; after all, you've only taught me how to wash properly."

"The greatest care must be taken when washing the face in this manner to procure the right kind of brush soft enough not to irritate the skin, and even this must be used very gently," said her instructor. "Whatever you do, be sure you get a really soft brush; it's most essential—and, by the way," he added a little maliciously, looking hard at the girl, "in the case of thick, dirty, and unhealthy-looking skin, this process of washing should be indulged in every night and morning, as nothing is more helpful in producing a clear and brilliant complexion."

"I ask you—would you have a clear, brilliant complexion if you lived out of doors and played as many games as I do?" asked the girl, roused to irritation.

"After violent exercise, or when the skin has been exposed to an unusual amount of dust and dirt, as is the case after a long railway journey or a dusty motor drive, it is a wise precaution not to use the water and the brush until a little cold cream has first been smeared over the face, and after five minutes wiped off with an old pocket-handkerchief."

The instructor's voice was patience personified.

"Well, when all is said and done, washing is a very important matter. We no longer live in an age when scent was a necessary substitute for the neglected bath."

"Oh, how horrid!" said the girl. "Scent instead of a bath! What an idea!"

"Well, we've changed all that," said the Professor. "Now we use scent in our baths instead of in place of them, and that reminds me I may say a word about the merits of scented baths, for though the custom is a growing one, the luxury of a perfumed bath is not nearly so common in England as it is on the Continent, where quantities of scent are distilled yearly for this special purpose."

"I certainly like the idea," mused the girl. "It is a very dainty one."

"It is one that might with advantage be freely indulged in," said the Professor meaningly, "for a little scent thrown into one's bath is worth all the scented soaps and perfumed washes ever invented. Nothing imparts so delicate a perfume as a daily bath in sweet smelling rose or fragrant, herb-scented water; besides which, perfumed baths possess the merit of being very good for the nerves, while a bath treated with eau-de-Cologne is most refreshing and exhilarating, and constitutes the best kind of cure to take after a long day's hard exercise or any mental strain."

"Oh, dear," said the girl, "washing seems to be the beginning and end of all your cures!"

"So it is. Cleanliness *is* the beginning and end of all Beauty lore, and the best and soundest advice that I can give to any of those who consult me as how best to achieve beauty is:

"Throw away rouge and cosmetics, disfiguring bleaching lotions and poisonous hair dyes, and substitute instead the daily use of fresh rain-water and pure soap, which should be used with never-tiring regularity, while the full amount of time should be given to each operation in turn. If aspirants to beauty would only adopt the simple methods, and act upon the principle of the woman who declared that if she couldn't be pretty, she would at least be clean, they would soon find that they had not only taken the first steps towards becoming their own Beauty Doctor, but their claims to good looks would increase by leaps and bounds."

"That was a nasty one," sighed the Novice when she found herself alone. "'If you can't be pretty, at least be clean.' I wonder if he was merely bad-tempered, or if he *really* thought me as grubby as all that? I wonder what he'll say next time on the subject of complexions?"

"That was a nasty one," sighed the Novice when she found herself alone. "'If you can't be pretty, at least be clean.'"

A NEW SERIES OF SPLENDID BACKWOODS STORIES.

JIM
The
BACKWOODS POLICE DOG

No. I.—HOW WOOLLY BILLY CAME TO BRINE'S RIP.

By

Charles G. D. Roberts.

Everyone who appreciates stories of the wild will welcome this new series by the famous Canadian writer, Mr. Charles G. D. Roberts. Mr. Roberts is the author of numerous books and magazine stories, and his description of life in the backwoods vibrates with the true spirit of one who knows it intimately.

At present this celebrated author is serving as a Captain in the King's 16th Liverpool Regiment, in full command of a double company, and is also acting as lecturer and instructor to the classes for officers. Curiously enough, Mr. W. R. S. Stott, who is responsible for the illustrations, has enlisted, having joined the R.A.M.C., and will, unfortunately, be unable to illustrate the remainder of the series.

I.

Jim's mother was a big cross-bred bitch, half Newfoundland and half bloodhound, belonging to Black Saunders, one of the hands at the Brine's Rip Mills. As the mills were always busy, Saunders was always busy, and it was no place for a dog to be around, among the screeching saws, the thumping wet logs, and the spurting sawdust. So the big bitch, with fiery energy thrilling her veins and sinews and the restraint of a master's hand seldom exercised upon her, practically ran wild.

Hunting on her own account in the deep wilderness which surrounded Brine's Rip Settlement, she became a deadly menace to every wild thing less formidable than a bear or a bull moose, till at last, in the early prime of her adventurous career, she was shot by an angry game warden for her depredations among the deer and the young caribou.

Jim's father was a splendid and pedigreed specimen of the old English sheep-dog. From a litter of puppies of this uncommon parentage, Tug Blackstock, the Deputy Sheriff of Nipsiwaska County, chose out the one that seemed to him the likeliest, paid Black Saunders a sovereign for him, and named him Jim. To Tug Blackstock, for some unfathomed reason, the name of "Jim" stood for self-contained efficiency.

It was efficiency, in chief, that Tug Blackstock, as Deputy Sheriff, was after. He had been reading, in a stray magazine with torn cover and much-thumbed pages, an account of the wonderful doings of the trained police-dogs of Paris. The story had fired his imagination and excited his envy.

There was a lawless element in some of the outlying corners of Nipsiwaska County, with a larger element of yet more audacious lawlessness beyond the county line from which to recruit. Throughout the wide and mostly wilderness expanse of Nipsiwaska County the responsibility for law and order rested almost solely upon the shoulders of Tug Blackstock. His chief, the Sheriff, a prosperous shop-keeper who owed his appointment to his political pull, knew little and thought less of the duties of his office.

As soon as Jim was old enough to have an interest beyond his breakfast and the worrying of his rag ball, Tug Blackstock set about his training. It was a matter that could not be hurried. Tug had much work to do and Jim, as behoved a growing puppy, had a deal of play to get through in the course of each twenty-four hours. Then so hard was the learning, so easy, alas! the forgetting. Tug Blackstock was kind to all creatures but timber thieves and other evil-doers of like kidney. He was patient, with the long patience of the forest. But he had a will like the granite of old Bald Face.

Jim was quick of wit, willing to learn, intent to please his master. But it was hard for him to concentrate. It was hard to keep his mind off cats, and squirrels, the worrying of old boots, and other doggish frivolities. Hence, at times, some painful misunderstandings between teacher and pupil. In the main, however, the education of Jim progressed to a marvel.

They were a pair, indeed, to strike the most stolid imagination, let alone the sensitive, brooding, watchful imagination of the backwoods. Tug Blackstock was a tall, spare figure of a man, narrow of hip, deep of chest, with something of a stoop to his mighty shoulders, and his head thrust forward as if in ceaseless scrutiny of the unseen. His hair, worn somewhat short and pushed straight back, was of a sandy red. His face, redly tanned and densely freckled, was markedly wide at the eyes, with a big, well-modelled nose, a long, obstinate jaw, and a wide mouth whimsically uptwisted at one corner.

Except on the trail—and even then he usually carried a razor in his pack—he was always clean-shaven, just because he didn't like the colour of his beard. His jacket, shirt, and trousers were of browny-grey homespun, of much the same hue as his soft slouch hat, all as inconspicuous as possible. But at his throat, loosely knotted under his wide-rolling shirt collar, he wore usually an ample silk handkerchief of vivid green spattered with big yellow spots, like dandelions in a young June meadow.

As for Jim, at first glance he might almost have been taken for a slim, young black bear rather than a dog. The shaggy coat bequeathed to him by his sheep dog sire gave to his legs and to his hindquarters an appearance of massiveness that was almost clumsy. But under this dense black fleece his lines were fine and clean-drawn as a bull-terrier's.

The hair about his eyes grew so long and thick that, if left to itself, it would have seriously interfered with his vision. This his master could not think of permitting, so the riotous hair was trimmed down severely, till Jim's large, sagacious eyes gazed out unimpeded from ferocious, brush-like rims of stubby fur about half-an-inch in length.

II.

For some ten miles above the long, white, furrowed race of Brine's Rip, where Blue Forks Brook flows in, the main stream of the Ottanoonsis is a succession of mad rapids and toothed ledges and treacherous, channel-splitting shoals. These ten miles are a trial of nerve and water-craft for the best canoists on the river. In the spring, when the river was in freshet and the freed logs were racing, battering, and jamming, the whole reach was such a death-trap for the stream-drivers that it had come to be known as Dead Man's Run.

Now, in high summer, when the stream was shrunken in its channel and the sunshine lay golden over the roaring, creamy chutes and the dancing shallows, the place looked less perilous. But it was full of snares and hidden teeth. It was no place for the canoist, however expert with pole and paddle, unless he knew how to read the water unerringly for many yards ahead. It is this reading of the water, this instantaneous solving of the hieroglyphics of foam and surge and swirl and glassy lunge, that makes the skilled runner of the rapids.

A light birch-bark canoe, with a man in the stern and a small child in the bow, was approaching the head of the rapids, which were hidden from the paddler's view by a high, densely-wooded bend of the shore. The canoe leapt forward swiftly on the smooth, quiet current, under the strong drive of the paddle.

The paddler was a tall, big-limbed man, with fair hair fringing out under his tweed cap, and a face burnt red rather than tanned by the weather. He was dressed roughly but well, and not as a woodsman, and he had a subtle air of being foreign to the backwoods. He knew how to handle his paddle, however, the prow of his craft keeping true though his strokes were slow and powerful.

The child who sat facing him on a cushion in the bow was a little boy of four or five years, in a short scarlet jacket and blue knickers. His fat, bare legs were covered with fly-bites and scratches, his baby face of the tenderest cream and pink, his round, interested eyes as blue as periwinkle blossoms. But the most conspicuous thing about him was his hair. He was bareheaded—his little cap lying in the bottom of the canoe among the luggage—and the hair, as white as tow, stood out like a fleece all over his head, enmeshing the sunlight in its silken tangle.

When the canoe shot round the bend, the roar of the rapids smote suddenly upon the voyagers' ears. The child turned his bright head inquiringly, but from his low place could see nothing to explain the noise. His father, however, sitting up on the hinder bar of the canoe, could see a menacing white line of tossing crests, aflash in the sunlight, stretching from shore to shore. Backing water vigorously to check his headway, he stood up to get a better view and choose his way through the surge.

The stranger was master of his paddle, but he had had no real experience in running rapids. Such light and unobstructed rips as he had gone through had merely sufficed to make him regard lightly the menace confronting him. He had heard of the perils of Dead Man's Run, but that, of course, meant in time of freshet, when even the mildest streams are liable to go mad and run amuck. This was the season of dead low water, and it was hard for him to imagine there could be anything really to fear from this lively but shrunken stream. He was strong, clear-eyed, steady of nerve, and he anticipated no great trouble in getting through.

As the light craft dipped into the turmoil, jumping as if buffeted from below, and the wave-tops slapped in on either side of the bow, the little lad gave a cry of fear.

"Sit tight, boy. Don't be afraid," said the father, peering ahead with intent, narrowed eyes and surging fiercely on his blade to avoid a boiling rock just below the first chute. As he swept past in safety he laughed in triumph, for the passage had been close and exciting, and the conquest of a mad rapid is one of the thrilling things in life, and worth going far for. His laugh reassured the child, who laughed also, but cowered low in the canoe and stared over the gunwale with wide eyes of awe.

But already the canoe was darting down toward a line of black rocks smothered in foam. The man paddled desperately to gain the other shore, where there seemed to be a clear passage. Slanting sharply across the great current, surging with short terrific strokes upon his sturdy maple blade, his teeth set and his breath coming in grunts, he was swept on downward, sideways toward the rocks, with appalling speed. But he made the passage, swept the bow around, and raced through, shaving the rock so narrowly that his heart paused and the sweat jumped out suddenly cold on his forehead.

Immediately afterwards the current swept him to mid-stream. Just here the channel was straight and clear of rocks, and though

the rips were heavy the man had a few minutes' respite, with little to do but hold his course.

With a stab at the heart he realised now into what peril he had brought his baby. Eagerly he looked for a chance to land, but on neither side could he make shore with any chance of escaping shipwreck. A woodsman, expert with the canoe-pole, might have managed it, but the stranger had neither pole nor skill to handle one. He was in the grip of the wild current and could only race on, trusting to master each new emergency as it should hurl itself upon him.

Presently the little one took alarm again at his father's stern-set mouth and preoccupied eyes. The man had just time to shout once more, "Don't be afraid, son. Dad'll take care of you," when the canoe was once more in a yelling chaos of chutes and ledges. And now there was no respite. Unable to read the signs of the water, he was full upon each new peril before he recognised it, and only his great muscular strength and instant decision saved them.

Again and again they barely, by a hair's-breadth, slipped through the jaws of death, and it seemed to the man that the gnashing ledges raved and yelled behind him at each miracle of escape. Then hissing wave-crests cut themselves off and leapt over the racing gunwale, till he feared the canoe would be swamped. Once they scraped so savagely that he thought the bottom was surely ripped from the canoe. But still he won onward, mile after roaring mile, his will fighting doggedly to keep his eyesight from growing hopelessly confused with the hellish, sliding dazzle and riot of waters.

But at last the fiend of the flood, having played with its prey long enough, laid bare its claws and struck. The bow of the canoe, in swerving from one foam-curtained rock, grounded heavily upon another. In an instant the little craft was swung broadside on, and hung there. The waves piled upon her in a yelling pack. She was smothered down, and rolled over helplessly.

As they shot out into the torrent the man, with a terrible cry, sprang toward the bow, striving to reach his son. He succeeded in catching the little one, with one hand, by the back of the scarlet jacket. The next moment he went under and the jacket came off over the child's head. A whimsical cross-current dragged the little boy twenty feet off to one side, and shot him into a shallow side channel.

When the man came to the surface again his eyes were shut, his face stark white, his legs and arms flung about aimlessly as weeds, but fast in his unconscious grip he held the little red jacket. The canoe, its side stove in, and full of water, was hurrying off down the rapid amid a fleet of paddles, cushions, blankets, boxes, and bundles. The body of the man, heavy and inert and sprawling, followed more slowly. The waves rolled it over and trampled it down, shouldered it up again, and snatched it away viciously whenever it showed an inclination to hang itself up on some projecting ledge. It was long since they had had such a victim on whom to glut their rancour.

The child, meanwhile, after being rolled through the laughing shallows of the side channel and playfully buffeted into a half-drowned unconsciousness, was stranded on a sand spit some eight or ten yards from the right-hand shore. There he lay, half in the water, half out of it, the silken white floss of his hair all plastered down to his head, the rippled current tugging at his scratched and bitten legs.

The unclouded sun shone down warmly upon his face, slowly bringing back the rose to his baby lips, and a small, paper-blue butterfly hovered over his head for a few seconds, as if puzzled to make out what kind of being he was.

The sand spit which had given the helpless little one refuge was close to the shore, but separated from it by a deep and turbulent current. A few minutes after the blue butterfly had flickered away across the foam, a large black bear came noiselessly forth from the fir woods and down to the water's edge. He gazed searchingly up and down the river to see if there were any other human creatures in sight, then stretched his savage black muzzle out over the water toward the sand spit, eyeing and sniffing at the little unconscious figure there in the sun. He could not make out whether it was dead or only asleep. In either case he wanted it. He stepped into the foaming edge of the sluice, and stood there whimpering with disappointed hunger, daunted by the snaky vehemence of the current.

Presently, as the warmth of the flooding sun crept into his veins, the child stirred, and opened his blue eyes. He sat up, noticed he was sitting in the water, crawled to a dry spot, and snuggled down into the hot sand. For the moment he was too dazed to realise where he was. Then, as the life pulsed back into his veins, he remembered how his

He flung his arms about Jim's shaggy neck and buried his face in the wet fur. And Jim, his heart swelling with pride, stood up and barked furiously across at the bear—

father's hand had caught him by the jacket just as he went plunging into the awful waves. Now, the jacket was gone. His father was gone, too.

"Daddy! Daddee-ee!" he wailed. And at the sound of that wailing cry, so unmistakably the cry of a youngling for its parent, the bear drew back discreetly behind a bush, and glanced uneasily up and down the stream to see if the parent would come in answer to the appeal. He had a wholesome repect for the grown-up man creature of either sex, and was ready to retire on the approach of one.

But no one came. The child began to sob softly, in a lonesome, frightened, suppressed way. In a minute or two, however, he stopped this, and rose to his feet, and began repeating over and over the shrill wail of "Daddy, Daddee-ee, Daddee-ee!" At the same time he peered about him in every direction, almost hopefully, as if he thought his father must be hiding somewhere near, to jump out presently for a game of bo-peep with him.

His baby eyes were keen. They did not find his father, but they found the bear, his great black head staring at him from behind a bush.

His cries stopped on the instant, in the middle of a syllable, frozen in his throat with terror. He cowered down again upon the sand, and stared, speechless, at the awful apparition. The bear, realising that the little one's cries had brought no succour, came out from his hiding confidently, and down to the shore, and straight out into the water till the current began to drag too savagely at his legs. Here he stopped, grumbling and baffled.

The little one, unable any longer to endure the dreadful sight, backed to the extreme edge of the sand, covered his face with his

Tug Blackstock, standing up in the prow of his canoe, plied his pole with renewed effort. (Page 213, col. 1.)

hands, and fell to whimpering piteously, an unceasing, hopeless, monotonous little cry, as vague and inarticulate as the wind.

The bear, convinced at length that the sluice just here was too strong for him to cross it, drew back to the shore reluctantly. He moved slowly up-stream some forty or fifty yards, looking for a feasible crossing. Disappointed in this direction, he then explored the water's edge for a little distance down stream, but with a like result. But he would not give up. Up and down, up and down, he continued to patrol the shore with hungry obstinacy. And the piteous whimpering of the little figure that cowered, with hidden face upon the sand spit, gradually died away. That white fleece of silken locks, dried in the sun and blown by the warm breeze, stood out once more in its radiance on the lonely little slumbering head.

III.

Tug Blackstock sat on a log, smoking and musing, on the shore of that wide, eddying pool, full of slow swirls and spent foam clusters, in which the tumbling riot of Brine's Rip came to a rest. From the mills behind him screeched the untiring saws. Outstretched at his feet lay Jim, indolently snapping at flies. The men of the village were busy in the mills, the women in their cottages, the children in their schools, and the stretch of rough shore gave Tug Blackstock the solitude which he loved.

Down through the last race of the rapids came a canoe paddle, and began revolving slowly in the eddies. Blackstock pointed it out to Jim, and sent him in after it. The dog swam for it gaily, grabbed it by the top so that it could trail at his side, and brought it to his master's feet. It was a good paddle, of clean bird's-eye maple and Melicite pattern, and Tug Blackstock wondered who could have been so careless as to lose it. Carelessness is a vice regarded with small leniency in the backwoods.

A few minutes later down the rapids came wallowing a water-logged birch-canoe. The other things which had started out with it, the cushions and blankets and bundles, had got themselves tangled in the rocks and left behind.

At sight of the wretched canoe, Tug Blackstock rose to his feet. He began to suspect another of the tragedies of Dead Man's Run. But what river man would come to grief in the Run at this stage of the water? Blackstock turned to an old dug-out which lay hauled up on the shore, ran it down into the water and paddled out to salvage the wrecked canoe. He towed it to shore, emptied it, and scrutinised it. He thought he knew every canoe on the river, but this one was a stranger to him. It had evidently been brought across the Portage from the east coast. Then he found, burnt into the inside of the gunwale near the bow, the letters J. C. M. W.

"The Englishman," he muttered. "He's

let the canoe git away from him at the head of the Run, likely, when he's gone ashore. He'd never have tried to shoot the Run alone, an' him with no experience of rapids."

But he was uneasy. He decided that he would get his own canoe and pole up through the rapids, just to satisfy himself.

Tug Blackstock's canoe, a strong and swift "Fredericton" of polished canvas, built on the lines of a racing birch, was kept under cover in his wood shed at the end of the village street. He shouldered it, carrying it over his head with the mid bar across his shoulders, and bore it down to the water's edge. Then he went back and fetched his two canoe poles and his paddles.

Waving Jim into the bow, he was just about to push off when his narrowed eyes caught sight of something else rolling and threshing helplessly down the rapid. Only too well he saw what it was. His face pale with concern, he thrust the canoe violently up into the tail of the rapid, just in time to catch the blindly sprawling shape before it could sink to the depths of the pool. Tenderly he lifted it out upon the shore. It was battered almost out of recognition, but he knew it.

"Poor devil! Poor devil!" he muttered sorrowfully. "He was a man all right, but he didn't understand rapids for shucks!"

Then he noticed that in the dead man's right hand was clutched a tiny child's jacket. He understood—he saw the whole scene, and he swore compassionately under his breath, as he unloosed the rigid fingers. Alive or dead, the little one must be found at once.

He called Jim sharply, and showed him the soaked red jacket. Jim sniffed at it, but the wearer's scent was long ago soaked out of it. He looked it over, and pawed it, wagging his tail doubtfully. He could see it was a small child's jacket, but what was he expected to do with it?

After a few moments, Tug Blackstock patted the jacket vigorously, and then waved his arm up-stream.

"Go, find him, Jim!" he ordered. Jim, hanging upon each word and gesture, comprehended instantly. He was to find the owner of the little jacket—a child—somewhere up the river. With a series of eager yelps—which meant that he would do all that living dog could do—he started up the shore, on the full run.

By this time the mill whistles had blown, the screaming of the saws had stopped, the men, powdered with yellow sawdust, were streaming out from the wide doors. They flocked down to the water.

In hurried words Blackstock explained the situation. Then he stepped once more into his canoe, snatched his long, steel-shod pole, and thrust his prow up into the wild current, leaving the dead man to the care of the coroner and the village authorities. Before he had battled his way more than a hundred yards upwards through the raging smother, two more canoes, with expert polers standing poised in them like statues, had pushed out to follow him in his search.

The rest of the crowd picked up the body and bore it away reverently to the court-room, with sympathetic women weeping beside it.

Racing along the open edge of the river where it was possible, tearing fiercely through thicket and underbrush where rapids or rocks made the river's edge impassable, the great black dog panted onwards with the sweat dripping from jaws and tongue. Whenever he was forced away from the river, he would return to it at every fifty yards or so, and scan each rock, shoal or sand spit with keen, sagacious eyes. He had been told to search the river—that was the plain interpretation of the wet jacket and of Tug Blackstock's gesture—so he wasted no time upon the woods and the undergrowth.

At last he caught sight of the little fluffy-headed figure huddled upon the sand spit far across the river. He stopped, stared intently, and then burst into loud, ecstatic barkings as an announcement that his search had been successful. But the noise did not carry across the tumult of the ledge, and the little one slept on, exhausted by his terror and his grief.

It was not only the sleeping child that Jim saw. He saw the bear, and his barking broke into shrill yelps of alarm and appeal. He could not see that the sluice between the sand spit and the bank was an effective barrier, and he was frantic with anxiety lest the bear should attack the little one before he could come to the rescue.

His experienced eye told him in a moment that the river was impassable for him at this point. He dashed on up-stream for another couple of hundred yards, and then, where a breadth of comparatively slack water beneath a long ledge extended more than half-way across, he plunged in, undaunted by the clamour and the jumping, boiling foam.

Swimming mightily, he gained a point directly above the sand spit. Then, fighting every inch of the way to get across the terrific draft of the main current, he was swept

downward at a tremendous speed. But he had carried out his plan. He gained the shallow side channel, splashed down it, and darted up the sand spit with a menacing growl at the bear across the sluice.

At the sound of that harsh growl close to his ears the little one woke up and raised his head. Seeing Jim, big and black and dripping, he thought it was the bear. With a piercing scream he once more hid his face in his hands, rigid with horror. Puzzled at this reception, Jim fell to licking his hands and his ears extravagantly, and whining and thrusting a coaxing wet nose under his arms.

At last the little fellow began to realise that these were not the actions of a foe. Timidly he lowered his hands from his face, and looked around. Why, there was the bear, on the other side of the water, tremendous and terrible, but just where he had been this ever so long. This creature that was making such a fuss over him was plainly a dog—a kind, good dog, who was fond of little boys.

With a sigh of inexpressible relief his terror slipped from him. He flung his arms about Jim's shaggy neck and buried his face in the wet fur. And Jim, his heart swelling with pride, stood up and barked furiously across at the bear.

Tug Blackstock, standing up in the prow of his canoe, plied his pole with renewed effort. Reaching the spit he strode forward, snatched the child up in his arms, and passed his great hand tenderly through that wonderful shock of whitey-gold silken curls. His eyes were moist, but his voice was hearty and gay, as if this meeting were the most ordinary thing in the world.

"Hullo, Woolly Billy!" he cried. "What are you doin' here?"

"Daddy left me here," answered the child, his lip beginning to quiver. "Where's he gone to?"

"Oh," replied Tug Blackstock hurriedly, "yer dad was called away rather sudden, an' he sent me an' Jim, here, to look after you till he gits back. An' we'll do it, too, Woolly Billy; don't you fret."

"My name's George Harold Manners Watson," explained the child politely.

"But we'll just call you Woolly Billy for short," said Tug Blackstock.

(Another delightful story of the backwoods will appear next month in which Jim, the plucky police dog, and Tug Blackstock, once again distinguish themselves.)

AN ACCIDENT TO THE MOON.

Who can the careless fairy be
  Who bumped the Moon to-night,
And broke a fragment off, you see,
  That helped to give the light?

It was so nice and smooth and round,
  And shone so white as well.
Let's seek the fragment on the ground,
  Where possibly it fell.

In vain! We've searched from night till noon. . . .
  Then clear as day is day,
The one who chipped it off the Moon
  Has carried it away.

John Lea.

A Burglar's Diary

"When the enterprising burglar goes a-burgling
(goes a-burgling),
And the criminal's pre-occupied with crime."

By Jessie Pope.

10-30. Wake, with a nasty jar, to find the sun shining on my face through the winder, just like a copper's bull's-eye. Such a 'appy dream as I'd 'ad, too! Dreamt I was cracking the crib of a honeymoon couple. Gagged 'em both with wedding cake, I did, and tied 'em together to the table leg with white satin ribbon. Quite docile, they was.

Whole place fair littered with wedding presents. Silver coffee pots and cream jugs 'anging from the ceiling, silver teaspoons and toast-racks cropping up all over the carpet. 'Ad to trample on 'em to get to the big stuff. Never see such lashings of swag. Sent me clean off my dot. Filled my bag and my pockets and my 'at. Took off my boots and was just filling them, too, when the bull's-eye shone in my face, and I woke with my 'eart fluttering like a bird in a cage.

11-15. Get up and 'ave my breakfast—steak, couple of rounds of toast, pot of tea. Never was much of a 'and at breakfast, but I likes my tea. Can't get over that dream, though. Fair haunts me. I'm not a superstitious chap, but there's a meaning in them there love-birds. Should know their faces anywhere. Nice young couple. Might run across them some time or other. Who knows? That dream was sent by Providence, and what's more, shouldn't be surprised if it comes true before the night's out, if my luck's in.

These 'ere love-birds gets too many presents nowadays, and what I pinches I pinches out of kindness. Too many valuables gets on their young nerves; then I comes along on my errand of mercy and relieves the strain. That's me! It takes all sorts to make a world, and if there was nobody to do my job, how'd the poor old coppers earn their bread and cheese? "Live and let live." That's my motto.

12-30. Nice growing morning. Sun shining, sweet flowers all a-growing and a-blowing. 'Ave a stroll on 'Ampstead 'Eath, and see if anything's doing. Always combine business and pleasure. That's me!

12-45. Notice learned-looking old party and stout old lady strolling along by Jack Straw's Castle with little dorg. Yorkshire toy. Give 'em good morning very respectful, and praise the dorg. They both beams at me.

"Yes," says old party, "and his pedigree is a good deal longer than he is. Wouldn't take £10 for him."

"I should think not, indeed," says old lady; "gold couldn't buy him!"

12-55. We talks affable and friendly about the little rat for a few minutes, when, gradually, we notices a sort of humming sound in the air like as if there was a big lawn-mower on the tree-tops.

"What's that?" cries the old gal. "'Enry, it's a Zeppelin!" and without with your leave or by your leave, she throws herself down on the ground, velvet bonnet, silk mantle and all, and wriggles 'er stout body under the nearest seat. Sure enough an airyoplane comes over.

"'Tain't a Zeppelin, but stop where you are, mum," I calls. "I believe it's one o' them 'ere Tobys."

Old gent picks up Yorkshire toy and drops 'im into 's greatcoat pocket, gets out 'is field-glasses, and bobs 'is 'ead about to find the airyoplane among the clouds, while the old gal begs 'im to come and join 'er in 'er funk 'ole, and not stand there tempting Providence.

"I think, my love, it's only one of our men going to 'Endon," he says, "but I'll tell you for certain in a minute."

1-0. While old gent sways about—holding up 'is spy-glasses, getting dizzier every minute, and the crowd's all gaping up in the sky with their mouths open, I puts my 'and sympathetic like in 'is greatcoat pocket, and slips the Yorkshire toy into mine. Smart bit of

work, though I says it. Done 'em both a good turn, too. Nice old couple like that should never make an idol of a dorg. Doesn't give their grandchildren a chance.

1-15. Take the little dorg along with me to the Tube, and let a pal of mine in Camden Town have 'im for three quid. 'E'll get £5 for the reward—*and* expenses. Little dorg a bit fretty when I parts from 'im, but as I says, "It's a passing cloud. It's better to be lost and found than never to be lost at all."

2-30. Have a sausage and mashed and a pint of bitter while I think over plans for the evening. 'Aven't got none in particular, but manage to find a quiet corner where I slips on my grey moustache and beard as a disguise in case anything turns up. But that there dream keeps on haunting me. Them two love-birds is waiting somewhere for me to come and crack their crib. I feel it in my bones.

3-25. Stroll round Waterloo Station. Nothin' doing—but pick up return half ticket to Richmond. Very annoying thing to lose a ticket, but always pleasant to feel it may come in 'andy for someone else. Richmond will do me a treat—or the other way about, with luck. So I catches the 3.40 by the skin of me teeth and a sharp sprint up the platform.

3-45. Nice respectable people in the carriage. Widder lady taking her kids to a party; young gent wearing new suit of clothes and white spats in the corner. Love-bird! What oh! not 'arf. Keep my eye on 'im, without appearing to. Finger of Fate pointing straight at the new wedding ring on 'is left 'and. Dream coming true, after all.

Elderly cove oppersite, reading newspaper. Two ladies, what 'as been shopping in Oxford Street, next me. I looks a cross between a parson and an undertaker myself. Carriage a bit stuffy. Ask the widder if she objects to 'aving the window down.

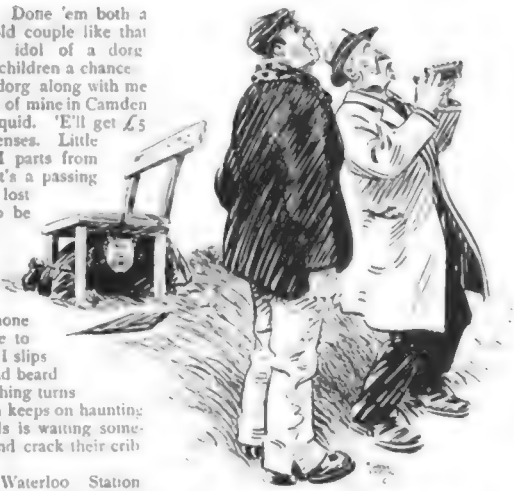
"Not at all," says she, very affable. "I'm a great believer in fresh air," she says.

"Same 'ere," says I.

Shopping ladies say they simply love it. Elderly gent scowls and turns up 'is coat collar.

"Ah, but you can have too much of a good thing," 'e says.

"That's where you make the mistake, sir," I says. "Windows open, no colds—windows shut—germs and influenza."



Old gent . . . gets out 'is field-glasses, and bobs is 'ead about to find the airyoplane among the clouds, while the old gal begs 'im to come and join 'er in 'er funk 'ole.

"Are you a medical man?" says 'e with a snort.

"No," says I, "I'm a b—— what I mean to say, I'm connected with the law."

"Ah, I expect the atmosphere of the Courts is often very oppressive," says one of the ladies.

"You're right, mum," I says, "very 'ot indeed I finds it occasionally. That's what makes me appreciate the fresh air when I gets outside. And it's not only in the day-time," I continues, "it's the sweet *night* air what you want to breathe right down into your lungs while you're asleep as keeps you young. It's the ozone of the midnight what keeps you so fit that diseases can't get no 'old on you."

"I quite agree with you," says the widder. "I always like my window open, but my poor dear husband would always have it shut."

"There you are, mum! What did I tell you?" I says, "and it's the lower windows of a 'ouse that should be left open at night—'alf the ozone in the air is give out by the soil after sunset. I'm sure as all of you 'a' noticed if you're out at night 'ow fresh and sweet the air is—like champagne."

They all nods their 'eads and says it was true—they'd noticed it theirselves.

"I used to 'ave a liver," says I, "not 'alf I didn't, till I kept my ground-floor windows open, but the oxygen in the night air cured it in less than a month, and look at me now!"

They looks, and being as my complexion is as 'ealthy as a milkman's, they says to each other it was wonderful. Even the elderly gentleman remarks, "That's very interesting," and puts 'is coat collar down, while the young gent with the new wedding-ring observes, "Fresh air and plenty of it for me, that's why I live in the country."

Before they left that carriage all them people was thinking so lovingly of night oxygen that any of me pals what 'as a fancy to crack their cribs will find they've got a soft job on. Like to put in a word for me comrades. Never did 'old with being a dog in the manger. "Do as you'd be done by.' That's my motto.

4-30. Young gent with new wedding-ring gets out at next station. I follows. Smart gal with pretty brown hair and grey eyes and no glove on her left 'and to show her new wedding-ring, meets 'im all smiles, as excited as if it was the first time as she'd set eyes on 'im, and full of beans to find 'e 'asn't been run over, or Zeppelined, or any little thing like that since she kissed 'im good-bye after breakfast.

Little lady love-bird of my dream! The luck always comes if you don't worry too much about it. "Take things as you find them." That's my motto, and don't forget to carry a bag as will hold 'em all.

4-40. Love-birds get on the top of a tram. I does the same, and sits on the seat behind them.

"Aunt Katie isn't coming, after all," says she.

"That's a mercy," 'e says.

"And they've never sent from Locke and Crosbys to see about the 'all gas," says she.

"Fatheads!" 'e says, "and I wanted to get the pictures hung in the 'all to-night."

"Never mind, dearie," she says, "we'll arrange the dining-room instead. We've never really got the things properly put out on the sideboard."

"Right oh!" says 'e. "What is there for dinner?"

"Bread-and-cheese and kisses, of course," she says, and after that they keep on cooing, so I 'as a nice read of the evening paper what somebody's left behind for the conductor.

5-15. Love-birds get down at end of a lane and wander up it harm in harm. I go on to next stop and follow up the lane just in time to see 'em going into the front door of a little jerry-built villa called "Rose Cot."

5-30. Walk down lane half-a-mile till I comes to a convenient haystack; get behind it and do a quick change. Take off my grey moustache and whiskers and turn sides of me coat—black broadcloth one side, dirty tweed the other—pull me socks over my trousers, cap over my eyes, pick up my bag and walk back to "Rose Cot."

Knock at back door; neat little servant gal with spectacles and worried frown opens it. Out rushes Scotch terrier with a "Wow! wow! wow! wow! wow!"

"Does the dorg bite, Clara?" I says.

"'E only bites tramps or burglars," says she.

"Does 'e though?" says I. "Well, I've come from Locke and Crosby's to repair the 'all gas," I says.

"Oh," she says, smiling all over 'er face, "'e won't bite *you* then. Come 'ere, Tweezer, naughty boy! You oughter come last week," she says to me.

"So I would, miss, if I'd knowd you was 'ere," I says. Always make a point of being pleasant to skivvies, plain or pretty.

She smiles, then looks as if she oughtn't to and goes away, which gives me time to make friends with Tweezer and ease catch of scullery window before she returns.

"Missus says, will you be as quick as you can, because Master wants the gas to 'ang the picters."

"That I will, miss," I says; "anything to oblige a lady," and wiping my boots very careful, I steps into bijou 'all.

6-15. Clara provides me with steps and a candle, and I mess about with a bit o' white lead and a pair o' pliers, and listen to conversation going on in dining-room. Love-birds evidently arranging their wedding presents, and getting their hair off in the process.

"We *can't* have that dreadful thing there," says she; "it is an absolute eyesore!"

"What dreadful thing?" 'e says. "D'you mean the épergne the firm gave me?"

"Yes!" says she. "The idea of sticking that early Victorian monstrosity on our Sheraton sideboard! Every time I look at it my blood curdles. If any of the firm come to dinner we'll have it on the table, of course, but until that time, dearest, do let us keep it out of sight."

"I don't agree with you, dear," 'e says

with a sharp edge in his voice. "It's solid silver, and worth a pot of money. Besides, the sideboard is the only thing we've got big enough to hold it. Where do you propose it should go?"

"In its crate in the box-room, dearest—there it will be safe, and won't annoy anybody."

"In that case," says 'e, "your uncle's claret jug goes back to the box-room *and* your godmother's cake basket. I always thought they were shockingly ugly, and the same crate will hold the lot."

"But my godmother has been so good to me all my life," she says with a sniffle. "I *couldn't* send her cake basket up to the box-room. Besides, I promised her I'd always use it and think of her every time."

"The promises you made before marriage, my dear child," 'e says coldly, "you can hardly expect me to keep afterwards."

"I don't!" she snaps. "You can eat the cake and I'll think of godmother."

"No!" says 'e. "It won't do! If we don't have *my* presents on the sideboard we won't have *yours* either. All stop, or all go. Please yourself. I think I'll just go to the club for an hour. I can't hang the pictures with that old fool of a gas man in the hall," and out he comes and trips over the steps.

"What, not finished yet?" 'e snarls.

"Yessir," I says. "I'm just on it. You'll find it's all right now, sir, only I don't advise you to light up to-night, sir. Give the white lead a few hours to set, sir," I says.

"All right," 'e growls. "You can get a glass of beer in the kitchen when you've done," and 'e slams out of the front door. Catch a glimpse of hen love-bird piping her eye in the dining-room as I take the steps into the kitchen.

6-50. Nice drop of beer and bit of bread and cheese—one of the nicest gorgons as ever walked. Nice little skivvy, Clara, though a bit solemn-looking in her spectacles.

"Well, young four eyes," says I, "what sort of a place have you got 'ere?" Never stands on ceremony; always go straight to the point with 'em—that's me!

"Oh, a *lovely* place," she says. "Such a kind master and missus."

Young gent with new wedding-ring gets out at next station. I follows. Smart gal with pretty brown hair and grey eyes . . . meets 'im all smiles.

"Well," I says "they've been 'aving a bit of a dust up about the silver on the sideboard."

"Oh, dear," she says, "ain't I kept it clean enough? I'm always polishing of it, but this 'ere damp weather tarnishes it at once. I tries to do my duty by them, but they're that good to me I never feel as I'm working hard enough for them."

"Look 'ere, my gal," I says, "I don't like to 'ear a domestic servant talk in that unnatural way. It don't sound 'ealthy. You ought to see a doctor before you 'as a nervous

Turn on lantern, open bag, unscrew eperney and pack it in, also cake basket and claret jug. All solid.

breakdown. That silver's got on your nerves."

"But I can't abear to see it dull," she says.

"Don't you worry about the silver being dull, my dear," says I, "as long as *you* ain't."

"Oh, I couldn't be dull here," she says, "so long as I've got Tweezer to keep me company."

Tweezer wakes up from hearthrug when 'e 'ears 'is name. Four eyes gets 'is plate of liver from cupboard, and put 'im through his tricks. Slip a few bits of it in my own pocket for future use.

Clara makes Tweezer die for England and give three cheers for the King—with a lump of sugar a time—and I make 'im die for Germany and give three cheers for the Kaiser with a bit o' liver. Clara gets rowdy and starts chasing me round the kitchen for teaching the dog such bad ways, and I give 'er a kiss under a bundle of dried 'erbs 'anging from the gas which I mistook for a bit o' mistletoe. Hen love-bird rings dining-room bell violently. Clara sets 'er cap straight and picks up 'er spectacles, and I clear off out of back door.

1-10. 'Ave a nice nap under haystack. Wake to find stars shining, but no moon.

Return to "Rose Cot." All dark and silent. Open scullery window and slip through kitchen and into passage. Steady breathing from love-birds' nest, heavy snoring from skivvy's. Hear a scuttle of little paws on polished floor.

"Tweezer—weezer—weezer!" I whisper, and shove a bit of liver straight at 'is blighted little nose. Enter dining-room with Tweezer jumping up and sniffing at my pockets. Turn on lantern, open bag, unscrew eperney and pack it in, also cake basket and claret jug. All solid. Love-birds won't quarrel over them no more, and poor little skivvy won't wear herself to skin and grief over keeping 'em clean. Like to do everybody a good turn when I can. That's me!

1-20. 'Ave a look round; rather fancy a couple of silver candlesticks on mantlepiece. Step forward to take them and tread on Tweezer. 'E gives tongue. Slip into hall and listen. All quiet. Decide not to risk candlesticks; not worth it—only electro after all. Give Tweezer last bit of liver, turn out lantern, and climb through scullery window. Cross garden and field, into lane; luck right in, all the way.

1-30. All the same wish the bag didn't weigh so heavy. That love-bird's firm must 'ave thought a deal of 'im to judge by the

weight of the eperney. Take a stick out of the hedge and sling bag over shoulder. Easier that way, but begins to chafe skin on shoulder blade. Got to get back to town before morning with the swag. Don't altogether fancy footslogging it all the way.

2-0. Sit down on a bank by house on London road to rest. Up comes motor-car; stops at gate. Gent in fur coat gets out—doctor by the looks of 'im, and hurries up to house. Shover turns car round, ready to start back for London, gets up on his seat and drops off to sleep. I sit and watch.

Presently back comes fur-coated gent again—forgotten something. Begins to rummage inside car. Shover still fast asleep. Doctor goes on rummaging, swearing horrid below 'is breath. Fact is, 'e's getting on the stout side—fur coat too small for 'im. Can't use his arms properly. Wrenches off coat. Throws it inside car, finds what 'e's searching for and hurries back indoors.

2-10. Wait till I hear door shut, steal up to car on tiptoe, put on fur coat, pull cap over my eyes. Lay my bag on the floor, and go round and give shover a dig in the ribs. 'E wakes with a start

"Oh, beg pardon, sir, didn't know as you was ready—" 'e says. But I'm getting into the car before 'e's well awake. Shover starts engine and gets a move on 'er—and away we go to London like a blooming Scotch express.

2-20. Switch on electric light, and find sherry and sandwiches on shelf, not to mention a box of fags. Just what I want—need such little trifles more than that well-fed old bloke. Do 'im good to go fasting for a bit. Saved 'im a lot of worry, too, by pinching a fur coat as would only grow tighter and tighter, and make 'im swear louder every day. Besides which the route march 'e'll 'ave to put in to get back to town will take 'is weight down a treat.

Done the shover a good turn, too. 'E'll get the sack in the morning, not 'arf, and 'ave the op. of joining the forces and serving 'is King and Country. No doubt there's a lot more good done by our profession than what meets the eye.

2-45. Pleasant cogitation disturbed by car suddenly pulling up outside fine big house in 'Arley Street. Just handy for my little crib; I'm in luck's way all along the line. Get out, bag in 'and.

"Good night sir," says shover. I give a grunt, and walk up the steps to front door. Shover drives car away to the garage. As soon as 'e turns the corner, nip down them steps across the road, down—Street, across—Square (as the Censor would say) through—Mews to my own door. Shut it quiet and careful behind me.

3-0. Warm and snug in my downy once more. 'Ad a very fair day, as times go. Done a kindness to everbody, male and female, what's 'ad the luck to cross my path. 'Arf asleep, when there comes back to me brain that there little rhyme what I learnt when I was a nipper:

> Little deeds of kindness
> Scattered as 'e goes
> Makes the 'appy burglar
> Earn 'is night's repose.

Don't sound quite right, but meets my case a treat. Blessing in disguise—that's what I am! Left the world brighter and 'appier nor what I found it this morning. What's more, my beautiful dream came true, and what's most, I never 'ad so much as a smell of a copper from start to finish.

A FREE HAND.

Last year I suffered the bitterest agony,
  Suiting my garments to Algernon's clothes—
Frocks for the river to blend with his blazers,
  Stockings to go with his wonderful hose.
Regent Street knew me—I haunted it daily,
  Matching his marvellous lilacs and blues;
Now that is over, for Algy's in khaki—
  Heaven be praised! I can wear what I choose.

D. R.

The Men of the New Armies.

By
W. Douglas Newton.

The following article by Mr. W. Douglas Newton, military expert to the Illustrated War News, and author of books and innumerable magazine stories of a military nature, gives a vivid character sketch of the men who make up our New Army. Mr. Newton was himself intended for the Army, but being debarred by defective sight, he studied war for fifteen years, and is now recognised as one of the leading authorities on the subject

Mr W. Douglas Newton, who pays a glowing tribute to our capital Army in the following article.

In a Chatham-Victoria train there were two privates of the West Surreys and a Sapper travelling third-class to joy in town. One of the West Surreys had the dirtiest face and the best temper of any man I have met. All three were Fellows of the university of the just and pungent adjective. They were men of the world now, sitting back with web belts loose, swapping battle experiences. They had much that was fresh to each other, for, if all had fought from Mons to the Marne, and through the Aisne to Ypres, the infantrymen had been in different companies, and the Sapper in another corps.

The Incredible Army.

I happened to be in that train and carriage myself, and I listened to their talk, and from that talk two remarkable points stood out. The first was their casual and homely outlook on all the hair-raising experiences they had been through; and the second was their wonder at the New Army. The New Army seemed to them to be more amazing than Ypres.

One of them said that Kitchener was getting all manner of men into his ranks—toffs, clerks, Stock Exchange chaps, lawyers, and other incredible folk. The Sapper said it was perfectly true; one of the fellows who came out to them in the first drafts was said to have chucked a job worth five hundred pounds a year, and a lorry driver of a section he knew owned his own car before August 4th, "and a big, I-don't-know-'ow-many-'orse-power car, too."

The three privates sat for two hundred yards' travel contemplating this wonder, and

trying to comprehend it. Then one of the Surreys said profoundly:

"Well, wot's th' matter with 'em all? Chucking up good jobs an' comfertable 'omes ter go out ter mud. I can't blanky well understand it."

Curious race the British! The three privates had left their own "'omes ter go out ter mud," but they failed to grasp why other men, especially men in soft and secure berths, should do it. I asked them if they wanted to go back themselves, and they answered, in voices which suggested that the idea hadn't occurred to them, that they emphatically did not. I attacked from another angle. Say, I suggested, you need not go back, would you? The privates thought it out.

"Well, ye see," said the dirty one, "our mates are out there gettin' it in the neck; I don't see 'ow we c'd go back on 'em."

And the Sapper said decisively:

"We're reglars, y'see. We took on th' job as a business, y'see. But these other fellers—five 'unnered pounds a year an' a car o' 'is own!"

The other twain nodded; the marvel overcame the grey matter in their brains.

An Amazing Spectacle.

They may be excused. They are puzzled by a phenomenon that still keeps the world guessing at its solution. The world has not yet fully gripped the idea of the New Army. From the bromide American who cannot understand why the British people do not get excited about themselves, to the Prussian who won't believe, or, rather, is only just beginning to believe the New Army to be a real and sound proposition, the spectacle of many million easy-going and quite usual young men throwing aside everything they have hitherto thoroughly enjoyed to join the ranks, is a picture problem more baffling than any the Hon. John Collier ever had hung on the walls of the Royal Academy.

The Rally to the Colours.

Yet puzzling or not, the thing has happened and is happening. Something like two million young men, for whom the wildest excitements of life hitherto have been gardening, or golf, or football, or the pictures of pretty actresses, or socks that are refulgent, have stepped out of a life supremely serene, supremely cosy and well-guarded as well as supremely commonplace, and, without any frills or patriotic mafficking, have offered themselves to the trials, ardours, hardships, and sufferings of war, and, moreover, if fate decrees that they should die, they say quite calmly: "Then I will die."

They have done all this with a holy and Homeric calm that the French adore under the term *flegmatique*, which the Prussians only understand as indifference, and the American and some of our own descriptive writers frequently find impossible to understand at all. I am not libelling the American or our own writers; I am merely analysing what I have read of them. They, as well as ourselves, are incessantly asking, "Why do these young men do it?" and "What sort of soldiers will these casual and cosy and commonplace fellows make when the test of war comes to them?" The Americans and ourselves are almost too close to nature to understand. We are like the three privates in the train. The unexpected doings of our brothers amaze us.

The Compelling Motives.

Well, first then, why do they go? Patriotism, of course, is the root motive, but patriotism attacks men in a thousand different forms. Not everyone of these plump, everyday, unexcitable young men has gone to the Army because the Germans thought they could beat the British, and have to be shown their folly, or because a poster threatened them with future painful conversations in which precocious infants discussed the war and what daddy didn't do in it. They have been patriotic for a thousand different ideas that the recruiting posters have never thought to mention.

Said a superlatively calm ex-leather merchant's clerk to me when I put the question:

"Have you ever got in a tangle with your ticket on a German station? No? Well, I have. I don't know how many bullies in gilt uniforms rush at you. They have long official titles which are difficult to remember, though in England they would be ticket inspectors, no more and no less. If you forget to mention their titles when you speak, you are not only their personal enemy, but the enemy of the German Empire. They bully you, they hector you, they treat you like mud, they blackguard you detestably. You stand mute if you know anything. They have the whole accursed system of Prussia behind them, and to fight against that is to be crushed by the weight of it. That's Germany to-day. The people are bullied and crushed by trivial people with military titles. Do you think I'm going to stand by and let that happen to England?"

That is why this man, who had a very

decent income, a delight in pictures, and an inveterate habit of staying at home and letting the rest of the British people look after themselves, joined the ranks.

No Looking On for Him.

Another man I know joined for a reason violently dissimilar. He saw a regiment marching in the sun. They were singing rag-time, and he said their keen brown faces were wonderful.

"You see," he told me in an expansive moment, "I couldn't stand aside and let chaps like that go, with me only looking on."

No sergeant came near him, but he sedately set straight his accountancy business, arranged for a gardener to look after his roses while he was away, and went to the recruiting office.

Another man didn't know why he had joined, but he was carrying under his arm a book by Jack London, and he took that in his hand and looked at that as he spoke. He was earning something just under the income-tax minimum at the time in an insurance broker's office. He had never been able to travel with his body, but his mind was always out under big horizons, and questing new lands. Recruiting was his chance of life. He took it.

Living Big.

And I might say here that the type of man who sees in this war a chance of living big and doing something big, forms a larger group than men imagine. Thousands have joined for King and Country, thousands left their obscure and unemotional jobs because of the horrors of Belgium and the slaughter of the innocents on our own East Coast. Thousands joined because the Kaiser was stupid enough to think Sir John French's army contemptible. Thousands joined because they could not bear to see other fellows doing the job they knew they should be doing themselves; indeed, for all the manifest reasons of pluck and patriotism and duty there have been scores of hundreds of recruits; but because of the old call of the oldest kind of British adventure there have been tens of thousands who have joined.

The Love of High Adventure.

The seas called, the battleground called, the heady desire of a quicker and more vital life intoxicated the apparently humdrum clerks, the steady-going lawyers, the commonplace counter hands, the dry and phlegmatic mechanics and miners and agricultural labourers, and they went.

Under the flatly uninspired exterior of seemingly humdrum people the old race instincts of high adventure still lurks—in fact, I don't suppose it has ever been dead (save in the pamphlets of those who proved by mathematics we were decadent); for the men who went adventuring to Agincourt were probably ploughmen, and the gay hearts who sailed the Spanish Main were probably mercers' sons, and the wonderful men of the Peninsula were tinkers and tailors and candlestick-makers, and the rest—just as the men of the New Army are now. They were all British, good patriots, and men seeking a brave life, and the man who leaves his ledger or his counter is exactly the same as his fathers. And his fathers were infernally good men.

And that brings us to the second point—their worth as soldiers and their value in the firing line. I was going to write down a reasoned argument pointing out that in action and in spite of a good many critics (many of whom are not German), the men of the New Army would be rather like the men of the old Army, only more so. I am saved the argument by to-day's newspaper. The men of the New Army have proved themselves to the most exacting critics of all, and they do not need my small bolstering argument. Said a German officer from Neuve Chapelle to an American journalist: "The new English troops are better than the old. We hadn't expected that."

Our Misleading Silence.

No, the Germans hadn't expected that, neither had the world, and neither had quite a number of the British—especially, I must say, some of the military British. The world and the Germans and the British who did not take the trouble to know, had been led astray by our phlegmatic silence. While many German papers were writing or drawing foolish cartoons about the ragamuffins who had joined the New Army, there was also a type of British officer who got the blues when contemplating the recruits.

All the same, says our surprised German officer:

"These men who charged us at Neuve Chapelle were not guttersnipes. They were not slum sweepings. They were the best blood in England."

They were, the officer insisted, lean, full-templed, long-jawed men. Those who went first under the hellish fire of Neuve Chapelle were youngsters for the most part, men who

looked as though they were sons of good fathers, or city clerks, or boys who had played in the open air.

They were, of course, exactly what the German officer thought them to be. They were the phlegmatic British who had lived without excitement through months of hard training, and had gone, without apparent emotion, to the battleline, and into one of the most terrible moments of the battleline. And it is the indestructible *sang-froid*, that made them so curiously composed and commonplace in their ordinary life, that makes them such good and terrible soldiers in the extraordinary life of the battlefield.

The Phlegmatic Britisher.

The Britisher is born with an equable and composed temperament. His emotions are forced into the channel of that temperament by his own distaste of outward show, and more, by his life's companions' distaste of outward show. Whatever his emotions, they are forced to flow in the same groove, and, therefore, he does not change. He is always the same, whether he is going at a steady jog-trot through business life, or whether he is fighting Germany. And being always the same you can neither make him excited—that is in the hysterical German or the emotional Gallic ways—on the battlefield, or afraid. He is always himself, and his self has not altered for a century.

War to him must be carried on in the same way as his ledgers were filled up, and his lawn mown in civilian life. In the former state, he frequently paused to light a pipe and contemplate the universe, in his new state he continues the habit. In one of the fights a private smoked steadily as he fired at the advancing Germans. He puffed at his cigarette between his shots, put the cigarette on a stone, fired, and took the cigarette again. When he came back from a bayonet charge his chief concern was, not the success his battalion had attained, but the fact that the cigarette had smoked itself out. The charge was a minor success of many successes. The cigarette was the last.

Our Imperturbable Bayonets.

In the episode of Villers—Cotterets when the Irish Guards took the charge of the heavy German cavalry upon imperturbable bayonets, one of the men put down his rifle when the horsemen were no more than two hundred yards away. He wanted a "fag." When he had been supplied, he lit it, and then with unruffled serenity took his place in line to receive the shock that should have annihilated —but did not.

The British do this not because they are melodramatic, but because they are themselves. They see nothing to get excited about, even in the prospect of death. "If you're killed, you're dead; what's the good of losing your hair about it?" said a private, and that was the end of the argument.

The imperturbable and homely British do not lose their hair about anything. I remember hearing a tale of a man who was brought into his business place by strangers. He was a complete wreck.

"Heavens!" cried his partner. "What has happened to you?"

"Oh, it's all right," said the man. "Don't you worry. I've just been run over."

That was typical of our casual attitude in civil life. In war we are the same.

A rather muddy dispatch rider turned up at headquarters and handed in his message. The General took the report, read it, and dismissed the cyclist.

"You'd better go and get a scrub down," he said; "you look as though you need it."

"Yes, sir," said the other, saluted, and went out. It was only when he turned that the General saw a great wound in his back. The man had forgotten to mention it.

Our Casual Attitude.

And these are not particular and individually courageous exceptions; the entire race of British soldiers is as casual and as phlegmatic. In the trenches the men sit back with their feet out of the mud, and while the "Jack Johnsons" and the shrapnel are arriving at one end, they are writing letters home at the other.

At Antwerp a man of the Naval Division was shelled out of the place in which he wished to sleep. He had evaded death by a fraction, but he came out of his extempore billet smiling.

"I'm a refugee," was all he found necessary to say about shrapnel and slaughter.

There are also innumerable cases of soldiers who ignored the enemy's effort of death to get water or food or fruit, and there is the story of the man who refused to carry a bag of coke for the braziers through the slime of the trench. He climbed out of the front of the trench, and with the Germans steadily shooting at him, walked the whole length of the works. He was only stopped once. His pipe went out. He sheltered behind a ridiculous eight-inch tree and relit it. Then he went on. I've seen men doing that sort of thing in the middle of a busy

London street, when, by all the laws of reason, they should have been run over. The same habit of casual phlegm holds good in both spheres.

Casual, phlegmatic, not greatly excited by successes or reverses, the men, late of the suburbs and now of the battlefield, are carrying on as they carried on at home. At home their apparent apathy to events of life and death have moved letter-writers and leader-writers to scorn and anger, and to a basketful of deprecatory adjectives. On the field their apathy to life and death moves even the Germans to admiring amazement.

Scorning Death.

We will go back to the surprised officer of Neuve Chapelle once more. He describes how a British regiment—he thinks it was the West Kents—came charging and dying through a terrible fire towards his trench. They pushed their way through the bullets as far as human flesh could go. Then:

"The Englishmen took cover at last, having gained the last possible inch, but they were hopelessly exposed; they could not get forward and could not stay. Finally the order came for them to fall back. They had 100 yards to go. What do you think those brave, god-like fools did? Instead of crawling back as the men of any other nation would have done—as trained soldiers are told to do—they rose to their feet, they walked back. No, by heavens, they strolled back. They stopped to light cigarettes, they picked up their wounded and carried them home. They were cut down by the score, but they did not hurry their pace."

"Getting There" without Haste!

No, the British do not hurry their pace, either in Britain, where their unexcited phlegm makes some people anxious, or on the battlefield, where it confounds the enemy into admiration. The West Kents walked back, but ultimately it was the Germans who walked out of Neuve Chapelle. The casual and commonplace Briton had got there. Getting there has always been his habit, and, being unexcitable, you cannot flurry him away from it.

THE HOLIDAY OUTLOOK.

In April last year, I remember,
We pondered on where we should go,
Agreed that Lyme Regis was deadly,
And Ilfracombe horribly slow.
Papa wanted golf and good fishing,
Mamma liked a pier and a band,
While Fred yearned for cricket and bathing,
And Kitty insisted on sand.

But now, though July is approaching,
Our holiday's still in the air.
Papa's busy drilling each evening
And hasn't a moment to spare.
Mamma attends Ambulance Lectures,
Manœuvres a bandage with skill,
While Fred's at the Front, doing wonders,
And potting the Huns with a will.

And Kitty, who's learning to signal,
Imagines her Corps can't exist
If she isn't there at the meetings
Though I say she'll never be missed!
There seems little chance of the seaside
I shan't be surprised if instead
I'm driven in sheer desperation
To spending my fortnight in bed.

Rosemary North.

CAP and BELLS

SPEEDING HIM UP.

"I was speaking to your father last night," he said at last, somewhat inanely.

"Oh, were you?" answered the sweet young thing, lowering her eyes. "Er—what were you—er—talking about?"

"About the war in Europe. Your father said that he hoped the fighting would soon be over."

The sweet young thing smiled.

"Yes," she remarked, "I know he's very much opposed to long engagements."

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A STRANGE RELATION.

A countryman on a visit to a friend in the city was taken by the latter to see the Zoo. By-and-by they came to a cage containing a kangaroo.

"What kind o' beast is that?" inquired the countryman.

"Oh," said the friend, "that's a native of Australia."

"Guidness, gracious!" exclaimed the countryman, "an' to think as I've a sister married to ane o' them."

• • •

A GOOD BAG.

A captain of Hussars gave a dinner to the men of his squadron the night before they left for the front. "Now, my lads," he said, "treat this dinner as you will the enemy." And they set to with a will.

After dinner he discovered one of the men stowing away bottles of champagne into a bag, and, highly indignant, he demanded what he meant by such conduct.

"I'm only obeying orders, sir," said the man.

"Obeying orders!" roared the captain. "What do you mean, sir?"

"You told us to treat the dinner like the enemy, sir; those we don't kill we take prisoners."

A GREAT DRAWBACK.

MOTHER: "Edna, look at your dirty hands, and I saw you wash them only half-an-hour ago."

EDNA: "Yes, mamma. I can't understand it, but your washing stays on ever so much longer than mine does."

• • •

OOZING OUT.

The visitor had kept her hostess at the open door fully an hour saying "Good-bye."

Finally an irate masculine voice indoors called out: "Say, Maria, if you're going out, go; if you're staying, stay; but, for Heaven's sake, don't ooze out."

THE ROYAL MAGAZINE.

A GREATER LOSS.

The worried countenance of the bridegroom disturbed the best man. Tiptoeing up the aisle, he whispered:

"What's the matter, Jock? Hae ye lost the ring?"

"No," blurted out the unhappy Jock, "the ring's safe eno'. But, mon, I've lost ma enthusiasm."

There once was a wonderful wizard
Who caught a most tractable lizard:
He taught him to dance
In the fashion of France,
But lost him, alas! in a blizzard.

EASILY DISPOSED OF.

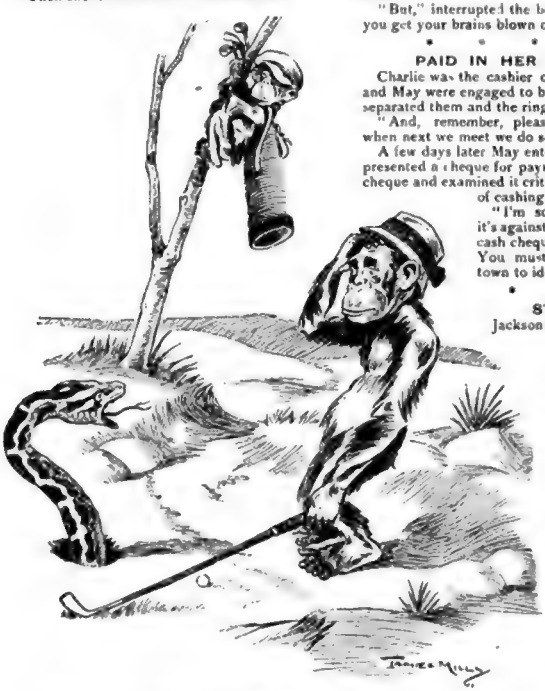
At a sale the other day an auctioneer was selling a horse.

"Although this is the poorest and thinnest horse I ever sold in the mart, I guarantee him to be the best of workers," he declared.

A little man bought the horse, and the auctioneer said to him: "Suppose this horse is not all I say he is, then bring him back again."

"But suppose you are not in?"

"Then shove him under the stable door."



THE SNAKE: "I say, if you don't stop using my den for a golf hole, there'll be a vacancy in your club."

NO ESCAPING IT.

Smith and Jones had luncheon together one day. Both ordered fried sole, and when the fish came one was large and the other was quite small.

Smith did the serving. He kept the large one for himself and gave his friend the small one.

"You're no gentleman," said Jones. "Now, if I had been serving, I should have given you the big one and kept the small one for myself."

"Well," replied Smith, "you'd get the small one either way, so what are you kicking about?"

OBVIOUSLY MISSING.

"And this," said the alleged old soldier, pestering a long-suffering editor, "is where the Arabs were massed in front of us. Here," pointing to another place on a dirty pocket map, "is where our division was drawn up. We deployed in this direction and our left wing was attacked by the enemy on this knoll. Just at this point I was wounded on the left shoulder, and a hundred yards farther on I got my right arm shattered by a piece of our own shells, and——"

"But," interrupted the bored editor, "where did you get your brains blown out?"

* * * * *

PAID IN HER OWN COIN.

Charlie was the cashier of a country bank. He and May were engaged to be married, but a quarrel separated them and the ring was handed back.

"And, remember, please," May added, "that when next we meet we do so as perfect strangers."

A few days later May entered Charlie's bank and presented a cheque for payment. Charlie took the cheque and examined it critically, and then, instead of cashing it, he handed it back.

"I'm so sorry," he said, "but it's against the rules of this bank to cash cheques for perfect strangers. You must find someone in the town to identify you."

* * * *

STILL STUPID!

Jackson and Johnson are not now on speaking terms. It all arose as the result of an argument which required some mental calculation.

"I tell you," said Jackson, "that you are altogether wrong in your conclusions."

"Pardon me, but I am not," replied Johnson.

"Didn't I go to school, stupid?" almost roared his opponent.

"Yes," was the calm reply, "and you came back stupid."

* * *

OVERTIME.

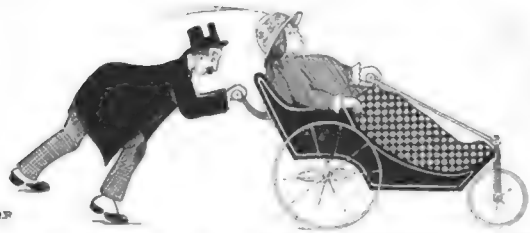
A famous actor, now dead, used to tell an amusing story against himself.

At a time when he had a lot of workmen redecorating his private residence, thinking to give them a treat, he asked if, after work one evening, they would all like to have seats to go and see him act in a popular play then running.

They said they didn't mind if they did, and being given complimentary tickets, all went on a Saturday night to see their employer's performance.

At the end of the week the actor's eye caught sight of this item against each workmen's name on the pay-sheet: "Saturday night. Four hours' overtime at theatre—8s."

FOR 2 NIGHTS ONLY!
PROFESSOR POOTLES
AND HIS
PERFORMING CROCODILE
POSITIVELY THE LAST TIME SHOWING HERE
FIRST NIGHT
EXTRA TURN
SECOND NIGHT



"You made me shove you. I didn't want to do it, and all the time you knew it."

LITTLE DROPS OF WATER.

The recent shipping disasters are scarcely subjects for mirth, but one is reminded of the story told of a skipper who ran a small steamer up and down the Clyde. One day, at low tide, he managed to get his vessel on a mudbank, and after he had exhausted his entire vocabulary in describing the Clyde, his erring steamer, and his still more to be condemned crew, he leant gloomily over the side waiting for the tide to rise.

Very soon he saw approaching the river a girl carrying a bucket. Obviously, she was coming down to get some water, and the skipper's wrath flamed up anew.

Leaning over the side, and shaking his fist at her, he shouted:

"My lassie, if you tak one drap o' watter oot here till I get afloat again, I'll warm yer ear for't!"

* * * * *

A WISE PRECAUTION.

A man was accused of having stolen a pair of trousers. There were several witnesses, but the evidence was rather meagre, and so the prisoner was acquitted. He was told that he could go, but still remained. His lawyer, to whose successful defence he mainly owed his liberty, hinted to him again that he was free to depart, but the man lingered until the court adjourned. Then the injured and innocent man whispered to his lawyer:

"The fact is, sir, I didn't like to move until the witnesses had left the court, because I've got on the trousers that I stole."

* * * * *

THE THIRD TIME OF ASKING.

NORA: "Why did you accept him the third time he proposed?"

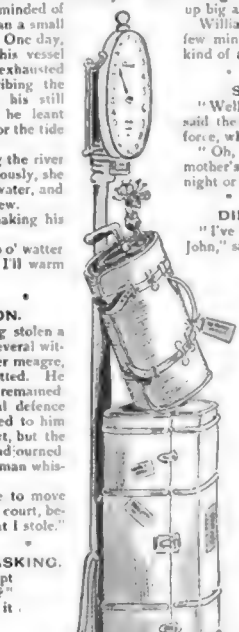
DORA: "Because he said it would be the last time."

* * * * *

NO USE FOR HIM.

Miss BUSYBODY: "I've got you down for a couple of tickets. We're getting up a raffle for a poor man of our neigh——"

Miss PRIM: "None for me, thank you! I wouldn't know what to do with a poor man if I won him."



SUMMER FLY: "By Jupiter, eighteen stone! Now I know why bald people don't like me to walk on their heads."

OPEN TO DOUBT.

William's uncle was a very tall, fine-looking man, while his father was very small. William admired his uncle and wished to grow up like him. One day he said to his mother:

"Mamma, how did uncle grow so big and tall?"

His mother said: "Well, when uncle was a small boy, he was always a very good boy, and tried to do what was right at all times: so God let him grow up big and tall."

William thought this over seriously for a few minutes, then he said: "Mamma, what kind of a boy was papa?"

* * * * *

SAFETY IN NUMBERS.

"Well, how do you think you'll get on?" said the sergeant to a recruit in the police force, who had been told off for night duty.

"Oh, I'll be all right!" he said, "my mother's coming round with me for the first night or two."

* * * * *

DIDN'T CARE A BUTTON.

"I've been reading an article on electricity, John," said the wife, as she laid down a copy of a technical magazine which she had been perusing. "And it appears before long we'll be able to get pretty nearly everything we want just by touching a button."

"It will never pay here," growled the husband. "You would never be able to get anything in that way."

"Why not, John?"

"Because nothing on earth would ever make you touch a button. Look at my shirt!"

* * * * *

A SIMILAR CASE.

The sailor had been showing the lady visitor over the ship. In thanking him she said:

"I see that by the rules of your ship tips are forbidden."

"Lor' bless yer 'eart, ma'am," replied Jack, "so were apples in the garden of Eden."

* * * * *

SUNDAY AT THE FRONT.

A woman said to her little boy the other day:

"You mustn't bowl your hoop in the front garden, dear. It's Sunday. Go and bowl it in the back garden."

"Isn't it Sunday in the back garden, too, mamma?" the little boy asked.

THOUGHTLESS BUTCHER: "This is the piece of meat for you, sir—as tender as the 'eart of the missis."
HENPECKED HUSBAND: "Oh! I'll have two sausages, please."

SELLING THE FIXTURES.

A certain neighbourhood in one of our large towns has decided drawbacks, from the point of view at least of some of the landlords of the cheaper property. It is said that an agent, on making the usual Monday morning call for rent at one house, was offered 1s. 6d. The rent was already in arrears, and he showed his discontent.

"Look 'ere, mister, you ought to be jolly thankful you've got this," said the grubby woman on the doorstep. "If my old man hadn't sold the back door you'd have got nothing."

* * *

LACK OF SOAP.

The dirty tramp looked shrewdly at Miss Wary, and she returned his gaze with equal shrewdness.

"You see, it's like this, ma'am. Six months ago I had a little home of my own, but I made an unfortunate marriage. My wife's temper was such that it kept me in hot water all the time."

"H'm!" said Miss Wary drily. "It's a pity there couldn't have been a little soap with it."

SOMETHING MARTIAL.

A young wife, who was singing the praises of her volunteer husband, said to her brother with great enthusiasm:

"Isn't Jack just wonderful? He's already been promoted to Field-Marshal!"

"From Private to Field-Marshal in two months? Impossible!" said her brother.

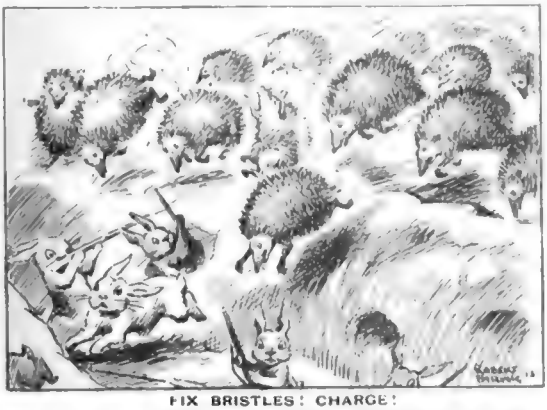
"Did I say Field-Marshal?" murmured the young wife. "Well, perhaps it's court-martial. I know it's either one or the other!"

* * *

NOT TO BE DRAWN ON.

"Father," said a young man, "I have decided not to enter the business, but to go in for an artistic career. I'll study in Paris, Rome, and other great world capitals. You don't object, I suppose, to my becoming an artist?"

"Object? No, no!" the father cried. "Object? Why, my boy, I'm delighted to have you become an artist, provided, of course, that you don't draw on me."



FIX BRISTLES! CHARGE!

The 1st Hedgehog Battalion pay off an old score by capturing a trench with fixed bristles.

THE LADY IN PINK

The Story of a Plot Frustrated.

By Nemo.

I.

There are few visitors at the Moon Hotel, Bartonsea, in winter, and the long dining-room was almost empty on this December evening. A couple of naval officers occupied a table in one corner; otherwise there were no guests except the lady in pink. She had only arrived that afternoon, and she had chosen a table near the door for dinner.

The scene was peaceful enough, and, but for the uniforms of the two Service men, there was here no suggestion of that titanic struggle which had convulsed the world. Silence reigned, save for the low tones of the men in the corner and the insistent murmur of the sea outside.

And yet the Moon Hotel was an outpost of England, perched on the edge of her eastern shore, not fifty yards from the dark waters beyond which a watchful foe bided his time to spring, with roar and fire, and tear the trident from Britannia's hand.

Presently the two men rose and left the room, and for a while the lady in pink sat by herself in solitary state. Then, about ten minutes later, Varleigh appeared and crossed to the table which his companions had lately occupied. There was only one place left for him to take, and this brought him face to face with the lady in pink. He sat down, and, while waiting for his soup, glanced across at her from time to time.

She was a large, handsome woman, with curious tawny hair and dark eyes, in the depths of which a smouldering fire seemed to burn, and as she continued her meal with slow deliberation, such was her art that Varleigh believed she had not noticed his furtive glances.

Not until the arrival of his savoury did she shatter this illusion, when, with a swift movement, she looked up, and their eyes met. Held by some spell which he could not shake off, Varleigh continued to look at her; then he saw the firm lips slowly part in a delightful smile. Next moment the lady in pink was regarding her plate with great intentness, and Varleigh, slightly flushed, had risen from his place and was preparing to leave the room.

But in order to reach the door he had to pass close by her table, and as he was in the act of doing this, the table-napkin slipped from her lap on to the ground at his feet. To pick it up was the work of a moment, but how their hands came to touch, Varleigh never knew. He only realised that the lady in pink was smiling at him again—that she was saying something to him—and that he felt absurdly clownish and ill at ease.

"Thank you so much!" she murmured, and there was a moment's pause while Varleigh mumbled something unintelligible. He made a half-movement towards the door, although he did not want to leave her, and her eyes seemed to convey a subtle invitation to remain.

"You are going on duty now, I suppose?" she asked, without any trace of embarrassment.

"Well, no, not at once. I am on in half-an-hour," he told her.

"And in half-an-hour I suppose you will go down on to that horrid cold pier which the sentry guards?"

"That's right," said Varleigh.

"Ah!" She looked at him compassionately. "But how draughty it must be out there! And you do not even get back to the hotel to sleep, do you?"

"No, because somebody must always be on duty."

She glanced up at him half shyly, and hesitated. "W-won't you sit down?" she asked, "or does it bore you to talk?"

Varleigh took the chair opposite her with alacrity.

"By the bye, do tell me what you are," she exclaimed before he could speak again, her eyes on the gold at his wrist.

"I'm only a sub-lieutenant."

She nodded. "And this dead-alive place is now a naval base, they tell me?"

"Yes, that's right."

"And all sorts of secret doings go on at the far end of the pier, I suppose?" she asked, dropping her voice to an awed whisper.

Varleigh laughed. "We carry out orders in connection with coastal defence," he answered vaguely.

The lady in pink laid her elbows on the edge of the table and looked across at him pleadingly.

"I adore secrets," she said. "Will you take me down on to the pier one day? Do! I should so love to see a naval base, and I couldn't do any harm if you were there with me."

Her eyes held his. The slow fires in their depths seemed to be kindling to life. A sincere desire to please her filled Varleigh's mind.

"I'm afraid that would be impossible," he said slowly. "No one is allowed down there, except on business."

The lady in pink laughed. "I shall ask you again when we know each other better," she announced.

"To know each other better means that we shall have to see something more of one another," remarked Varleigh hopefully, "and I'm afraid you'll soon get bored by me, for I'm not a bit intellectual or clever, or anything of that sort, you know."

The lady in pink smiled at him in her strangely direct way.

"I don't care for intellectual people," she said. "I like people who like me."

"Then we are friends!" declared Varleigh, with conviction.

The lady in pink stretched a strong, white hand between the wine-glasses.

"Agreed," she murmured, "for I believe in a sympathy which springs to life between some people even at their first meeting, don't you?"

Varleigh pressed her hand in his.

"I know you speak the truth," he said. "I felt the same thing myself when I first saw you!"

A clock in the hall struck the half-hour, and Varleigh jumped to his feet.

"I must be off," he explained, "but we shall meet again to-morrow."

"Why, of course," she returned. "*Au revoir*, my new friend!"

Varleigh pulled on coat and cap, picked up his electric torch, and passed out into the inky night, with that last long look of the lady in pink stabbing his brain like a shaft of purple light.

II.

A stiff breeze from the south-west blew inland, and ragged storm-clouds were flying across the face of the moon.

"Halt! Who goes there?"

A voice, sharp and imperative, leapt out at Varleigh from the darkness ahead.

"Friend!"

"Pass, friend; all is well!"

Now he had passed the sentry, and the dull thud of his footfalls struck up from the wooden planking of the pier itself. Varleigh hurried on, his eyes fixed upon the single spot of light thrown out by his torch in front, while the freshening wind told him that every moment he was leaving the land further behind. Below his feet the waves roared and hissed angrily, and the whistling wind stung his face in its flight shoreward.

Then suddenly a large, indistinct shadow rose up before him, and, extinguishing his torch, Varleigh thrust open a swing door and stepped into a building.

He was in an empty theatre—one of those houses of entertainment built on our piers for the benefit of summer holiday-makers. Before him lay the darkened stage, with curtain down and footlights out, while overhead to right and left stretched the galleries, packed with empty chairs that had been removed from the floor of the house.

Scattered about this floor lay great coils of rope, cases of ships' stores, cables, buoys, and a medley of seafaring gear, while, standing out bravely from the wall behind him, there still hung the programme of a summer

Calmly facing him, with her back to the door, stood the lady in pink. One hand she held behind her back, and the other showed up like white wax against the black coat—

performance, announcing the names of the players and title of the piece.

There was something grimly incongruous about this mixture of peace and war—the empty stage, the theatrical programme, and the smell of tar and sea salt. A first glimpse at the new naval base suggested that the days of masts and yards had not yet passed.

Turning aside, Varleigh opened another door and entered the temporary office which had been erected under a gallery on the O.P. side of the stage. This room had been merely boarded off from the main body of the theatre, its outer wall being the original wall of the building.

Varleigh entered the office with a jump.

"Twenty-five Taubes and one hundred Zeppelins are just coming over to drop bombs on the pier, Traviss!" he exclaimed, hanging his cap on a peg by the door.

"Then I'll leave you to deal with them, young fellow my lad," replied a lengthy lieutenant, rising from his chair. "By the way," he added, "have you seen the latest arrival up at the Moon? A spankin' fine girl, all in pink. She was having dinner while Grey and I were there to-night."

Varleigh blushed.

"Oh, yes," he said casually; "she was there just now."

"Well, sweet dreams, and if the Germans come, ring me up," remarked Traviss, swinging to the door behind him.

For a few moments Varleigh stood listening to his comrade's footsteps, and then, as they died down into silence, he drew up a chair to the desk and glanced through the papers before him.

The whistling of the wind outside sounded shrill and eerie, and underfoot the sullen roll of the sea struck and broke perpetually against the pier supports.

This night watch was varied with the weather. Sometimes a fierce gale from the North Sea lashed the waters to fury, so that they rose and smote against the very walls of the little office, drenching its floors with brine, and shaking the whole hulk of the trembling pier.

On other nights scarce a breath of wind stirred the rising sea mists, and at such times, hour after hour, the sea kept whispering, whispering, as though a host of stealthy conspirators were planning evil in the darkness. To-night was what Varleigh would have called the happy medium, the sort of evening he preferred, with enough wind and sea to make things seem homely, but no gale to drench the office.

Soon after ten o'clock he pulled out a shut-up bedstead (War Office pattern) and shoved it into position beside the writing-desk. He placed the telephone within reach of the bed-head, and fixed a string attached to the electric light switch under his pillow, so that he could light up without moving. Then, removing his overcoat and boots, he crawled in under the blankets, and made a final survey of the room to see that all was shipshape. The key of the safe was on a string round his neck, and there was a signal pad and pencil within reach, in case the Admiralty or some other authority rang up.

III.

How long he slept Varleigh did not know, but the first fact which struck him on waking was that the wind had died away. A stealthy swishing of waters was the only sound audible—but, no. . . .

He raised himself on one elbow, listening more intently than ever in the darkness.

To identify sounds with that constant lapping of the sea everywhere was difficult, and so at first Varleigh was inclined to think he had made a mistake. A few moments afterwards, however, he changed his mind. He distinctly heard a movement outside the office, and now there came the sound of a moving latch, followed by a scraping of wood on matting, which told him the door was being pushed cautiously open. He became acutely conscious of a new presence in the room, and, consumed by curiosity, he groped for the string beneath his pillow. A single jerk on this pulled down the electric switch, flooding the office with light, and, with an exclamation of incredulity, Varleigh leapt out of bed.

Calmly facing him, with her back to the door, stood the lady in pink.

She was wearing a fisherman's black oilskin, so that he could only catch a glimpse of her dress. One hand

"Well, I'm hanged!" The words seemed to form themselves while he stared and stared, wondering whether this was a dream. (Page 234, col. 1.)

she held behind her back, and the other showed up like white wax against the black coat. Her face was flushed, and her eyes burnt brilliantly, as though from exertion or some powerful emotion. But as she met Varleigh's startled glance her lips curved in the smile which lured and fascinated him.

"Well — I'm — hanged!" The words seemed to form themselves while he stared and stared, wondering whether this was a dream.

The lady in pink gave a musical little laugh.

"You would not bring me down with you, so I had to come alone," she remarked reproachfully.

"But how on earth did you pass the sentry?" he asked. "That entrance to the pier is only about six yards broad, and I don't believe that even a woman could slip by without being caught."

"Silly boy. You don't think I came that way, do you?" she retorted.

"I'm dashed if I know how you came," he confessed; "perhaps by aeroplane!"

"Stranger things than that might happen," said the lady in pink, with a queer little tightening of the mouth. "But, no, as matter of fact, I came by sea."

"By sea! But how?"

"Well, you surely know there is a boat-house on the beach, and also a groyne!"

Varleigh nodded.

"Very well. I took a boat and shoved off from the groyne, which, as you also know, runs out parallel with the pier. Then I landed at the pier-head, and here I am."

"It was a jolly sporting trip," confessed Varleigh, "but it's against regulations, so now the only thing is for me to escort you back along the pier. I'll have the boat sent back to-morrow."

He turned to pick up his coat, and as he did so the lady in pink stepped into the middle of the room, so that the bed and desk corner lay between him and her.

"One moment!" she cried crisply, in a voice that made Varleigh look up with a jerk.

He was just in time to see himself covered by a revolver, held steadily by the lady in pink.

"Why—what——" he began, and broke off, gazing blankly at her.

"I want a little memento of my visit," she said smoothly, "something to take away with me, you understand, and I want it quickly, as time is precious nowadays."

"What do you mean?" demanded Varleigh hoarsely.

"Just this," she snapped, her eyes hardening. "Somewhere in this office you have the new Admiralty Code, which was issued to the British Navy last week. I want that code, and I want it *now*."

"Phew!" Varleigh took a step back and leant against the wall. "So you're a spy," he muttered reflectively.

"Never mind what I am. Give me the code book, or—take the consequences."

She gave the weapon a suggestive little twitch.

"Quick now, which is it to be?"

Varleigh's mind moved very swiftly. He was in a pretty tight corner, for, although there was a service revolver in the room, it was hanging on the wall behind her, so that he had no chance of securing it. There was nothing within his reach except the pillow on his bedstead and the electric torch, which lay on the writing-desk beside him.

The lady in pink stepped up to the other side of the writing-desk.

"I don't want to shoot you," she said, "because you're quite a nice boy, but——" and her eyes narrowed—"the issues are too big for personal feelings to stand in the way, and I must have the code book. Will you give it to me or not?"

Varleigh looked her straight in the face.

"I quite agree with you, madam," he said gravely. "Personal feelings are out of place here, and I am simply part of a big machine which has certain duties to perform. If I get outed in doing my part of the job, it's mere luck. That's all."

"Then you refuse to hand over the code book?"

"I absolutely refuse."

"I'll count five, and then——"

She paused for a moment, and began to count.

"ONE."

Varleigh's mind flashed at fever heat from thought to thought.

"TWO."

There was one wild chance left to him, he realised.

"THREE."

Yes, it was all that he could do—he must try it.

"FOUR."

He straightened his back suddenly against the wall, pressing sharply upward. He felt the electric light switch fly back at his pressure, and in the same instant the office was plunged into darkness.

"Five."

A deafening roar rang out through the room. He was conscious of a spurt of flame and a splitting of wood as the bullet passed through the wall against which he had been leaning.

But as the light went out he dived forward, and now the electric torch was in his hand, with its blinding shaft of light full in the eyes of the lady in pink. Before she could recover herself Varleigh had flung himself across the end of the writing-desk and gripped her by the wrist.

Once in his hold, her resistance was useless. Her weapon fell on to the desk, and Varleigh, having seized it, proceeded to slip his own revolver into his other pocket. After that he switched on all the lights and faced her.

The lady in pink was glaring at him like some wild beast, but Varleigh only smiled good-humouredly.

"It is just possible," he said, "that the sentry at the end of the pier did not hear your shot. Let's presume he did not, and go outside to look for your boat."

He threw open the door for her, and followed her across the theatre, and out on to the pier-head. The boat was alongside some wooden steps. The lady in pink descended the steps slowly, and took her seat in the boat with great deliberation. Varleigh unhitched the painter, and turned the craft about.

"I am sorry if I hurt your wrist," he said, and just then a single moonray lit up the face of the lady in pink.

She looked back at him, her wonderful eyes starlike and luminous in the half-light.

"And I," she said quietly, "am sorry you are English, because, after all, you are not a boy, as I thought, but a man!"

And as she rowed away through the moonlight Varleigh blushed.

IV.

Traviss came back into the outer office and regarded the hole in the wall thoughtfully.

"Very careless of you to let off the shooting iron by mistake, young fellow," he remarked. "I think we will have another sentry or two on the pier in future to chaperone you."

Varleigh grunted approval.

"By the way," went on Traviss, "where did you get your second six-shooter from?"

"What do you mean?" asked Varleigh.

"Only that I've just picked this bullet out of the beam in the next room, and it's not of the service brand."

They eyed each other comprehendingly for a moment or two. Then Traviss spoke again.

"Curious thing," he said, "but do you know that woman in pink left for London this morning in a hurry? Government's standing her free quarters in an alien camp, I hear."

"Ah!" said Varleigh.

SEPTEMBER—JULY.

Up here in the Highlands there's a patch of crimson heather
Where we sat together in September-time, you know,
Laughing, talking lightly of the shooting and the weather
And nothing in particular. 'Twas just two years ago.
Round us stretched the moorland, not a soul to come a-peering;
Far off was the popping of the guns as there we lay
Laughing, gaily, lightly, with no thought of what was nearing,
Just two years ago, now, on a soft September day.

'Way across the Channel there's a grave beside a river,
In a quiet, lonely place that would be hard to find;
Overhead the willows weep; beside it grasses shiver;
Round with clinging fingers are the wildest flowers twined.
He is lying *there* now; and up here among the heather
I am sitting, thinking of the change two years has made,
Thinking of the life we'd planned that we would spend together;—
Yet I'm *glad* he went to do his duty unafraid!

Ethel Talbot.

June in Arcadia

by Dorothy Rose

"Love rules the court, the camp, the grove."

I.

JUNE was gardening when it happened, amid a background of roses and velvety lawn, looking, in her frock of pale pink voile, like the sweetest rose of them all. But there was a cloud on her pretty face quite out of keeping with the beauty of the day, though entirely excusable in a young lady who sees a surfeit of khaki billeted on her neighbours, and her own offer of hospitality disregarded.

It was probably Cousin Deb's doing—she had been mildly aghast at the idea of tobacco smoke in the white-painted rooms and muddy boots on the polished floor of the hall, and had very possibly vetoed in private June's impetuous promise that she would have two or three "Tommies" if they wouldn't mind candles in their bedrooms and breakfast at eight o'clock.

Yes, June decided as she attacked a green fly with deft, relentless fingers, it was quite time she asserted herself. She would go to the camp near by and demand of the Quartermaster, or whoever it was kept soldiers on tap as it were, that at least one embryo hero should be lodged at the White Cottage. Having come to this decision, she heaved a sigh of relief, tucked away a rebellious wave of her golden hair, and broke into a smile that would have brought any intelligent young man to her feet for ever.

Norman Lane was an intelligent young man; consequently, catching, so to speak, the afterglow, he promptly turned his motor-cycle in the narrow lane and approached the garden hedge. Mischief lurked in his boyish grey eyes, but the smile on his youthful, clean-shaven face would have disarmed someone far more experienced than June.

"Excuse me"—he had a delightful voice, June decided—"but are you expecting a private to billet?" he asked as he dismounted. "I was directed to the white house on the hill, and there isn't another in sight."

For a moment June hesitated, her blue eyes scanning his khaki-clad figure and attractive face. Well she knew the white house he sought was the farm hidden behind the trees to the rear of her own—only an hour ago the boy who brought eggs and milk had confided to her that they expected another soldier that morning. Well, Mrs. Hawke had three already—she could easily make it right with her. Here was a soldier sent, so it seemed, in answer to her prayer—it was beyond human nature to pass him on.

"I'm so glad to see you!" June held out her hand, congratulating herself she had avoided a direct untruth. "Do come in. I'll open the gate," and she ran across the lawn.

"It's awfully good of you to have me," the young man said as he wheeled his cycle carefully up the path between the gay flower-beds. "I can sleep on a sofa or anywhere, you know."

"You'll sleep in a bed while you are in my house," put in June severely. "You don't know how glad we are to have you—I do hope you'll whistle, and smoke, and drop your boots, and do all the noisy things men ought to do. I shall love it and so will Cousin Deb," she added, though with less conviction.

But to her untold relief Cousin Deb surrendered to the charm of this young man who treated her with as much gallantry as though she were sweet seventeen, instead of a prim but well-meaning fifty-seven. His quiet deference pleased her, and when he refused to enter the drawing-room for fear of soiling the lavender carpet with his dusty boots, she took him to her crabbed old heart at once.

With the coming of "her soldier," as June dubbed him, a new era commenced at The White Cottage. From early morning, when tumultuous splashings in the bath-room gave evidence of a male in possession, to the time

when a violent thump indicated that Private Lane had abandoned his substantial army boots for the day, the presence of a man in the house was forcibly evident.

Most of the day Norman's duties claimed him, but when he could snatch an hour or two off it was always June who bore him company. With some difficulty he initiated her into the joys of riding in a side-car, at first with trepidation, but later with a sublime disregard for speed limits. Together they scoured the countryside, returning with appetites that almost converted Cousin Deb into the belief that even motor-cycles had their uses.

Several weeks had passed before it occurred to Norman that there was any danger in their growing intimacy. Then quite suddenly his eyes were opened.

It happened one evening after dinner when he sat at the writing table in the dining-room window, round which fuchsia and jessamine climbed in loving profusion. June was in a wicker chair on the lawn, bending her pretty brows over his tunic on which she was sewing a button. Pen in hand, he sat idly gazing at her, admiring the play of the sunlight on her golden hair, and the graceful outline of her white-clad figure.

Presently she finished her task, and, laying down her scissors and thimble, rose to her feet, holding the tunic with tender care. Then, as she laid it across her arm, he saw her bend, and with a radiant little smile lay her lips to the khaki sleeve. There was no mistaking that simple, spontaneous action. Norman cursed himself for a fool—not for anything would he have June losing her heart to him. Always prompt in action, he decided that he must tell her what it had not occurred to him to mention before.

"Excuse me"—he had a delightful voice, June decided—"but are you expecting a private to billet?" he asked.

The opportunity came later that evening

when they sat in the drawing-room window talking, while Cousin Deb nodded in the lamp-light.

"To tell the truth, I'm not struck on getting a commission," he said in answer to a question of June's. "I'd rather be a private—there are some real good chaps among them—and it's a topping life anyway."

"But your people?" hazarded June. "They'll expect you to do great things—your family and friends, you know," she added hastily, for she knew that both his father and mother were dead.

"I haven't any near relations." Norman rose and looked out on to the moonlit lawn. His voice was very quiet and had a curious touch of constraint in it as he added: "The only person it could really matter to is my *fiancée*."

"Your *fiancée!*" June's interested voice masked her feelings admirably. Chill fingers seemed to have gripped at her heart, but she rallied herself bravely—if he knew her secret he would go away, and that she could not bear.

"She's been on a long visit to a married sister in Ceylon," he said, turning at last. "Her father, Sir Guy Garnet, has a place at Beechford, about ten miles from here. She ought to be on her way home now, but she's a shocking correspondent," he added with a smile.

June rose to her feet, and hid an impending tear by stooping over her work basket.

"You *will* be glad to have her back," she said briskly. "I'm going to bed now if you don't mind. I want to be up early and weed the carnation bed. Good-night!"

"Good-night!" Norman took her hand and told himself with relief that he had been mistaken.

And up in her little bedroom June had her cry out and felt better.

II.

It was three weeks later when June and Norman, returning from a motor-cycle ride, untidy and incredibly dusty, found a large cream motor-car at the gate, and a girl whose clothes bore the stamp of Bond Street, just being let in by the awe-struck maid.

"Good Heavens!" whispered Norman, "as they followed her into the shady little hall. "It's Viola."

"So here you are?" The newcomer's welcome was hardly that of a girl who had met her *fiancé* after many months' absence. Her dark eyes scanned his dusty uniform, then rested appraisingly on June's flushed face. In her tweed coat and skirt and close-fitting straw hat she felt suddenly uncouth and deplorably shabby beside this tall, graceful figure in pansy colour draperies evolved by a master hand.

"Let's go somewhere where we can talk," commanded Miss Garnet imperiously when Norman had introduced her to June, and divested himself of his coat.

In silence June held open the door of the drawing-room, at whose restful white walls and hangings of chintz patterned with wisteria and dim green leaves, Viola tilted her nose disdainfully. Her drawing-room she had already mentally furnished in a colour scheme of amber and *tête-de-nègre*.

"Well?" Viola returned her lover's embrace with a perfunctory kiss, and, gliding across the room, sank down on the big sofa, tucking a mauve silk cushion behind her back. "You don't seem overjoyed to see me, my dear Norman."

Even as he protested his delight, sitting beside her on the sofa, Norman felt there was a grain of truth in her assertion.

"You know better than that, Vi," he said. "And, besides, you always hated me to be demonstrative," he added, admiring in a vague, impersonal way the silky darkness of her hair and the peach-like contour of her cheek.

"Well! Well!" Viola patted his knee with a white-gloved and negligent hand. "What I'm dying to know is whether you're a captain or a lieutenant or what? I haven't had a letter for months—we've been yachting, you know. Don't tell me you're a second-lieutenant," added the girl, who hardly knew a General from a Corporal.

"I won't." Norman stood up and faced her as though bracing himself to meet a blow. "Fact is, Vi, I'm not an officer at all. I'm a simple 'Tommy'—a private, you know."

"A private!" If he had confessed to being a cannibal the girl's voice could hardly have expressed more scorn and incredulity. "Norman, you don't mean it. You're joking. Why, the idea's absurd!"

"Why?" The man rapped out the question sharply. A glow of admiration for his well-knit figure and alert, handsome face, kindled for a moment in Viola's heart.

"Why? Because all your friends—all my friends, too—have got commissions. You could get one as well. You must get one. I never dreamt of your being anything else but an officer. Haven't you any ambition?"

"Not in that direction, I confess. I can serve my country just as well as a private. There are some first-rate fellows among the 'Tommies,' I can tell you."

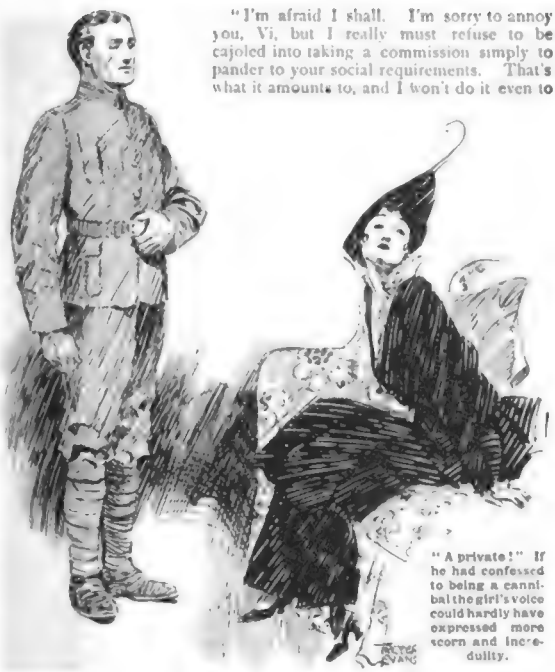
"Oh, I daresay." Viola gave an impatient shrug. "They're well enough in their way. But your place isn't among them. Besides, there's the social side to consider. Here we are at Beechford with several officers billeted and others coming and going, and I can't even ask you, my *fiancé*, to dinner. It's unreasonable, absurd!" Viola rose and throwing off his restraining hand, paced up and down the sunlit room.

"Of course, if you don't consider I'm fit to eat at the same table as officers, I shouldn't dream of intruding," returned Norman, nettled at her tone. "Personally, I think all this petty snobbery is a pack of nonsense."

"Don't be foolish, Norman." Viola paused in her restless walk and laid an ingratiating hand on his sleeve. "Isn't it perfectly natural I should want you to be on an equality with the other men in our set? And whatever you say you can't meet them on an equal footing as a private. It's impossible!"

"Then I won't meet them at all." Norman disengaged himself gently and faced his *fiancée* squarely. Viola bit her lip as she noted the stubborn set of his jaw and the unyielding light in his honest grey eyes.

"Father can easily get you a commission. I suppose you won't refuse to accept one if it is offered?" she asked lightly but without conviction.



"A private!" If he had confessed to being a cannibal the girl's voice could hardly have expressed more scorn and incredulity.

"I'm afraid I shall. I'm sorry to annoy you, Vi, but I really must refuse to be cajoled into taking a commission simply to pander to your social requirements. That's what it amounts to, and I won't do it even to please you." Norman was striding about now, his eyes fixed moodily on his boots, while Viola stood by the mantelpiece, her little suede-shod foot tapping the fender impatiently.

"In that case"—she stepped deliberately in his path, her beautiful face white with repressed anger—"in that case it means a choice between giving up your life as a private and giving up me. Come, which is it to be?" In spite of her annoyance Viola assumed her most melting tones, and coaxed a pleading smile to her lips, never doubting that Norman would yield to the spell of her beauty and charm.

"If you put it that way—well, I've told you I won't accept a commission," replied Norman with no flicker of emotion on his tanned face.

"You mean you won't take it even to keep

me?" Viola was fumbling with her glove and her voice had grown shrill.

"No."

"Then take this." She held out a half hoop of diamonds set in platinum. "I'll marry no man who refuses a request of mine solely for the sake of a stupid whim."

If she had expected remonstrances or pleading she was disappointed. In silence Norman opened the door and conducted her to the waiting car, the ring still held in his hand. When she had gone and he turned back into the hall there was little of the dejected lover about his bearing. His face broke into a smile as June, bearing a tea-tray, appeared from the kitchen.

"I thought Miss Garnet would like some tea," she said, as he took the tray from her and bore it into the drawing-room. "Why, she's gone!"

"Yes." Norman put down the tray, and set a chair for June. "The fact is—we've had a difference of opinion, and Miss Garnet and I are no longer engaged."

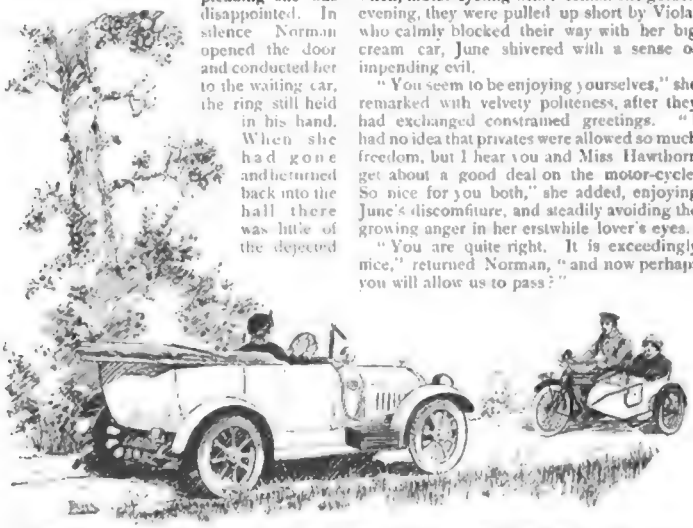
III.

It did not take June long to realise that her tentative efforts at sympathy were wasted on Norman, who, beyond occasional lapses into unwonted silence and a persistent avoidance of Beechford and its neighbourhood, showed few of the symptoms usually ascribed to rejected lovers.

July was a month of sunshine, and to June with a new, hardly acknowledged hope stirring in her heart, life at the White Cottage seemed almost Arcadian in its happiness. But even dwellers in Arcadia are not immune from the shafts of outside jealousy, and so when, motor-cycling with Norman one golden evening, they were pulled up short by Viola, who calmly blocked their way with her big cream car, June shivered with a sense of impending evil.

"You seem to be enjoying yourselves," she remarked with velvety politeness, after they had exchanged constrained greetings. "I had no idea that privates were allowed so much freedom, but I hear you and Miss Hawthorn get about a good deal on the motor-cycle. So nice for you both," she added, enjoying June's discomfiture, and steadily avoiding the growing anger in her erstwhile lover's eyes.

"You are quite right. It is exceedingly nice," returned Norman, "and now perhaps you will allow us to pass?"



When motor-cycling with Norman one golden evening they were pulled up short by Viola, who calmly blocked their way with her big cream car.

Viola ignored the request. "It must be so satisfactory for Miss Hawthorn to feel how well she has succeeded after luring you to the house under false pretences," she continued, while June's face grew slowly crimson beneath her hat brim.

"What do you mean?" Norman's eyes blazed, and his face grew suddenly tense with repressed fury.

"Of course, I thought you knew." Viola shrugged her shoulders. "She knew perfectly well you were expected at the White Farm, but she led you to believe the White Cottage was your billet. That's the result of being so attractive, my dear Norman."

"I don't believe it." Norman looked from one to the other, but the anger in his glance

was all for the haughty, complacent girl at the steering-wheel of the car. There was only pity, and a faint flicker of amusement, in the gaze he bent on June, who sat drooping-ly in the side-car.

"It is true. I always verify my facts. My maid's sister happens to be dairymaid at the Farm. She told me they expected a soldier that day, and he never turned up. Mrs. Hawke, the farmer's wife, told me how Miss June, as she called her, came up and squared her. Of course, she did not mind—she had several soldiers there already—indeed, she seemed very amused. I must say it didn't seem to me altogether a well-bred thing to do, but I'm evidently not *au fait* with country etiquette."

With this parting shot Viola let in the clutch, and was soon lost in a cloud of dust on the way to Beechford.

Norman was silent on the ride home, but not by word or look did he refer to Viola's disclosure. June, casting timid glances at his profile, read anger into his air of reflection, and bit her lip to keep back the tears of shame and humiliation. The beauty of the evening had gone for her, and when, on reaching home, she sought refuge in the orchard, a delectable spot with its fruit-laden trees and long grass, it seemed to her a place of desolation.

It was there, huddled beneath a cherry tree, that Norman, having garaged his cycle, found her. His feet made no sound on the grass, and it was not until he stood beside her that June was aware of his presence. Then she scrambled to her feet, looking, with her pale pink frock and tumbled golden hair, a very disconsolate little figure indeed.

"You're not taking to heart what Miss Garnet said just now, surely?" Norman bent upon her a pair of amused but pitying eyes.

June took refuge in her absurd handkerchief, and nodded violently. "It was true," she murmured unhappily.

"Who cares?" To her surprise Private Lane threw back his head, and laughed heartily. "If it comes to that, Miss June, I'm just as bad, for I knew I was due at the White Farm, but, well—I saw you in the garden, and I thought I'd make a bid for a billet at the White Cottage instead. I confess I wasn't prepared for such an easy victory," he added humorously.

"Do you really mean it?" June's blue eyes peered out wistfully from behind a barricade of cambric.

"Of course, I do." Norman took possession of the handkerchief and the hand which held it as well. "You don't realise how charming you look in that pink frock—it is the same one, isn't it? I couldn't have passed you by. I bless the day when I first came to the White Cottage."

"So do I!" whispered June promptly, making a vain attempt to free herself and hide her blushes.

"You can't get away." Norman slid an arm round her waist. "After the war I shall come back to the White Cottage. Tell me, sweetheart, will you wait for me? It may be a long time—and there will be danger."

June lifted a face tremulous with the yearning love and pride of the girl who, in the moment of her greatest happiness, surrenders her best beloved to her country.

"I will wait for you always," she said as their lips met.

WAYS AN' MEANS.

Jenny I met in the mornin', out along in the dew;
She was lookin' for mushrooms, an' I was lookin' too;
An' her eyes was fresh as the mornin' with the sunshine breakin' through.

Jenny I met in the noontime, up along in the street,
Trippin' away to Market with music in her feet;
An' her eyes was bright as the noontime shinin' on harvest wheat

Jenny I met in the dimsey, down along to the well,
An' offered to carry her pitchers, jest to give her a spell:
An' her eyes was stars in the dimsey . . an' . . . . there isn't no more to tell.

Bernard Moore.

Mr. Bert Thomas gives us the gentle Hun in the act of seeing off the enemy's Ambassadors on the declaration of war.

"SO GLAD TO HAVE SEEN YOU!"

Divers Departures, Illustrated by Leading Humorous Artists.

By Lesbia Robinson.

Seeing people off may be either an occasion of pure rejoicing or one of deepest woe—it is always one calling for much tact and self-restraint. Uncle Henry may have sown the seeds of strife and dissension in your peaceful home, and driven the one cook in the world to give notice, but etiquette demands that you strangle your unholy glee at his departure and assume an attitude of patient resignation.

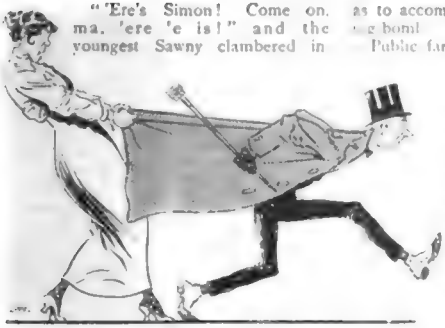
Aunt Prudence, on the other hand, may have endeared herself to all, but you dare not voice your regrets lest she lay the dust of the platform with her affectionate tears and fall on your neck with embarrassing endearments.

It is doubtful whether unpunctual or over-punctual people are the most trying to see off. In the former case the agony is shortened, since it usually resolves itself into a sprint up the platform and a hasty thrusting into the carriage of all the luggage as yet unshed; in the latter, it may mean a dismal half-hour spent in dodging baggage-trucks and bandying wisps of conversation through a carriage-door engulfed by other unhappy "seers-off."

There are some families who make a hobby of seeing people off, and turn out in full force on the least provocation.

Simon Sawny had the misfortune to be a member of such a family, and, purposing to take his best girl for a day at the seaside, determined to evade the usual bodyguard of sticky children and effusive parents. On the pretext of calling for Gertie he set forth alone, in all the glory of brick-red tie and yellow boots, ignoring his mother's cheery promise that they'd meet him under the clock at the station.

Having collected Gertie and discovered the train, they settled themselves snugly in the further corner of the farthest coach and disported themselves after their kind. Just as the whistle blew, the door flew open, and a shrill treble burst in upon their glorious solitude.



Sometimes the parting is an awful strain, as in the case depicted by Mr. Starr Wood.

"'Ere's Simon! Come on, ma, 'ere 'e is!" and the youngest Sawny clambered in followed by two small sisters, all flushed and jubilant.

"Come back, you children!" Mrs. Sawny dashed up in a state bordering on apoplexy, the guard slammed the door and the train moved off. With lowering brow Simon effected introductions, for Gertie had not yet entered his home, while his mother fanned herself with her second-best bonnet, and the children clambered on to the seat, dusting their boots on Gertie's clean pink frock in the process.

So Simon lost his day of days and his lady-love into the bargain, for Gertie's father kept a ham and beef shop, and her refined taste could not support a day of undiluted Sawnys without breaking down under it. Simon is now keeping company with the next-door neighbour's daughter, Clara, who has seen his family in the most every-day situations, and harbours no illusions regarding them.

The seasoned traveller can always be seen off without losing one's self-respect, owing to his air of calm detachment and the blameless aspect of his luggage. It is the novice who travels with unwieldy packages, who makes the air hideous with his inquiries as to whether the train stops at Snailport-on-Sea, and generally behaves in a manner calculated to make anyone so misguided as to accompany him, pray for an annihilating bomb!

Public farewells are always trying affairs, save in the cases where a conventional handshake meets the occasion. Algy, young and self-conscious, and torn between the desire to kiss Maude, and the feeling that the whole world is looking on, probably bungles the embrace and lands the kiss in the neighbourhood of her left ear. Covered with confusion, he bolts into the carriage, leaving her with a painful consciousness that her hat is awry, and that a very correct matron is making audible remarks anent the "shameless behaviour of young people nowadays!"

Probably the most trying form of being seen off is that reserved for the bridal couple about to leave for their honeymoon, who, in addition to the banter of family and friends, have to endure a fusilade of rice, confetti, and white slippers, and, moreover, look as if they liked it! There is only one instance of retaliation on record. The hero was one Rupert Squeers, who, appalled at the prospect before him, resolved at least to give as good as he got. Nettled by receiving a Niagara of rice down his neck, he flung his

The joy of the henpecked husband who has just seen his family off to the seaside, touchingly illustrated by Mr. Alfred Leete.

"Escorted off the Premises"—a moving picture of a tramp's departure, by Esmond.

entire supply, bag and all, at the company in general. Unfortunately, he had appropriated the wrong bag from the store-cupboard, and it burst full in the face of his only wealthy uncle, releasing a stinging shower of haricot beans.

The young bride turned out a splendid cook, and the only time they had words was when she served haricot beans with roast mutton for dinner.

If family farewells are trying, those of a semi-public nature are even worse. It is a stout heart that does not quail before the doggedly expectant glances of the menials who flutter round the departing visitor at a hotel.

Mr. Sniffkins may have mentally doled out his tips to a nicety, but the chances are that the combined attack of waiter, hall-porter, "boots," and chambermaid, will work havoc with his arithmetic, and he will beat an inglorious retreat, having tipped the head-waiter the first sixpence of his career and pressed the half-crown intended for the "boots" into the palm of a visitor hovering on the outskirts.

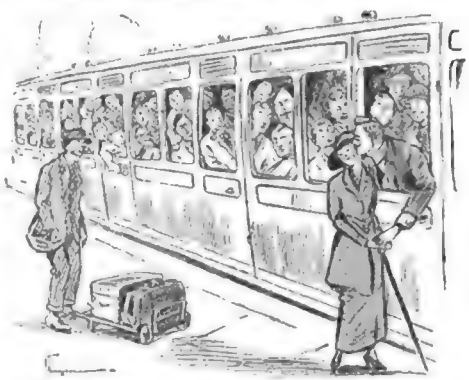
There is a story told of a wealthy and kind-hearted countryman, whose unobservant ways and near sight often combined to get him into trouble. His departure from the Hotel Regal took place at dinner-time, and unknown to his own particular waiter, who was busy in the dining-room. Seeing a smooth-faced man in evening-dress waiting in the vestibule, Mr. Bumpkin peered hurriedly into his face, and deciding that his air of noble languour could only belong to a waiter, pressed a sovereign into his palm.

"My dear sir—" the young man, who was, indeed, Lord Slapfoodle, a languid sprig of the nobility, shaken out of his wonted calm, tendered the coin back. "I think there's some mistake—er——"

"Not at all! Not at all!" Mr Bumpkin's benevolent face shone at this striking example of modesty. "You've looked after me well, remembered my fads, and so on—you've earned it, I assure you."

"But I couldn't dream——"

"Then buy something for the wife—a silk blouse or a string of beads or some boots for the children, perhaps." Mr. Bumpkin waved the proffered coin away and departed, leaving one of the wealthiest peers



"A Public Performance"—Mr. Thompson shows us the infatuated couple, whom not even a gaping audience will prevent embracing

in England stricken speechless at the thought of his wife's face did he but take this voluble old gentleman at his word.

Mr. Bumpkin, who had always contended that there were unworldly men in every walk of life, frequently retails this story in vindication of a much-abused profession.

For pure, unadulterated joy in seeing off, that of the henpecked husband who wafts his wife and family off for a holiday takes a lot of beating. With what affectionate solicitude he commandeers the corner seats and bestows the bulging luncheon baskets in the rack. He jibs at nothing. Joyously he faces the stony stare of the refreshment-room maiden, in search of a refill for the baby's bottle, or, alone and unsupported, purchases a copy of "How to Crochet Comforts" from the grinning youth at the bookstall.

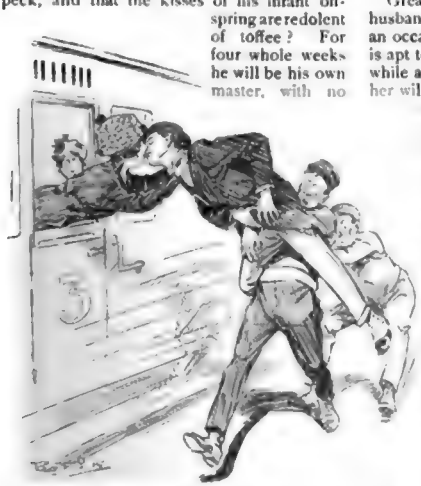
His farewell kiss is a masterpiece of suitable emotion, and moves the motherly old lady in the corner to shed reminiscent tears down her jet-trimmed mantle. What cares he that his wife returns his embrace with a grudging peck, and that the kisses of his infant offspring are redolent of toffee? For four whole weeks he will be his own master, with no one to question his goings-out or his comings-in.

According to Mr. Thomas Henry even the burglar shares in the general rejoicing when he sees a happy family off to the seaside, provided, of course, that they have left the silver behind.

Great tact is needed on the part of the husband if he would avoid unpleasantness on an occasion of this kind. Too much effusion is apt to arouse suspicion in the wife's breast, while an overdone reluctance at parting with her will inevitably lead to withering remarks anent the selfishness of husbands who grudge their wives a little change and holiday.

The English are a reserved race; consequently their partings have not the effervescent sentiment of their neighbours across the Channel, where everybody kisses everybody else with great gusto and an entire lack of discrimination.

A certain spurious gaiety occasionally marks farewells in this country, leading people to fling sweets into the carriage window, or run alongside the moving train until brought up short by a tea-waggon, but usually an air of decorum marks the partings. Of course exceptions must be made in the case of engaged couples, who often throw every shred of decency to the winds, and would cheerfully hold up a boat express in order to snatch an extra kiss.



"The Call to Arms" : a tragedy of the railway station, portrayed by Mr. Reg. P. Smith.

ANOTHER THRILLING SPY STORY.

The SPY HUNTER

II.—THE MYSTERY OF THE TWO CIRCLES.

By William Le Queux.

In the following story Harry Nettlefield, the genial young Marconi operator, forsakes the sea to join the Confidential Department of the Government, and help in unearthing German spies. How he assisted in the capture of some spies who were preparing to aid hostile aircraft on Dartmoor makes an exceedingly thrilling story.

The mystery of the Two Circles was one which proved, indeed, curious. Had it been revealed at the time, it would, no doubt, have caused considerable public alarm. But, like most of the subjects of our inquiries, it was kept an official secret.

My connection with the Admiralty in a previous case resulted in an offer being made to me on the outbreak of war to join the Confidential Department of the Government, and to assist in that branch of the service which dealt with German espionage.

Truth to tell, I became a spy hunter.

Now as soon as war was declared, and the British public recovered from the first shock of the astounding news, the vague warnings which had been uttered for years against the presence of spies in our midst were suddenly recollected.

The result of this was that the country suffered from an acute attack of spy-mania, and the War Office, the Admiralty, the police, and the newspaper offices were flooded with letters written by persons, many of them hysterical, who believed that they detected a spy in every foreign-born person!

The indoor staff of my Department were literally "snowed-under" by correspondence. Hundreds of cases of suspicion came in daily, until it became quite impossible to cope with the sudden change in the attitude of the public, which, before war broke out, had regarded the existence of spies among us as a mere romantic fiction, existing mostly in the minds of sensational novelists.

Carrying a military pass as means of identification, and given practically a free hand, I travelled hither and thither, through the month of August, in a big grey service car, making inquiries and "hunting hares"—as we express it—which mostly turned out to be perfectly innocent.

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The German spy-system in Great Britain is far more subtle and ingenious than most of the tens of thousands of our correspondents believed. To cope with them one has to sharpen one's wits to razor-edge, and to combine the diplomat with the detective.

Now I confess that though, as a wireless operator, I naturally knew French—in order to read the Paris press and the interesting messages sent out from Brest Arsenal, Nieuport, and Marseilles—yet my German was decidedly elementary. Here, Clotilde—my own Clotilde—came to my rescue, for she knew German well, though no person knows German "perfectly"—as we hear it declared so often—unless that person is German-born.

One day, the fifth of September—a blazing, breathless day it was, I remember, the historic day when the British boldly turned and faced the enemy after their retreat from Mons to the Marne—I found myself with Clotilde Atherton speeding along a shady Devonshire lane not far from Tavistock. Accompanying me was Major Kellaway, of the Military Operations Department, a tall, thin man of middle age, who wore glasses and spoke in a quick, shrill voice, and was attired in golfing tweeds. The chauffeur was a rather stout mechanic named Day, who had enlisted for the war, a man possessing a very keen sense of humour and a rather deep voice.

Clotilde, who nowadays was with me much more constantly than when I had served as Marconi operator afloat, came for a special purpose. Truth to tell, we had left Plymouth in order to investigate a very curious report concerning a spot on Dartmoor somewhere between Princetown and Ashburton. My *fiancée* was dressed neatly in blue serge, and wore a little motor-bonnet of grey suède with a Saxe blue veil, which suited her fair complexion admirably.

Of middle height, she was slim and dainty, with well-moulded features, big, blue, innocent-looking eyes, a small, sweet mouth, and soft gold-brown hair of that colour which one usually associates with childhood. Neatness and good taste were always evident in her dress, yet she was by no means prudish in her manner, but frank, outspoken, and constantly light-hearted and merry.

Into the true spirit of our adventurous undertakings she had entered thoroughly, and as a pretty woman possessed of quick wit and an unusual knowledge of French and German, she had already been of the greatest use. Woman's wit and natural intuition are always of service in the exciting profession of spy hunting.

We had taken our tea at that long, white-painted hotel at Two Bridges, which every visitor to Dartmoor knows well, and about half-past five o'clock found ourselves travelling on the long road which leads like an endless white ribbon over the wild, undulating Moor towards that pretty spot called Dartmeet, where the winding river Dart flows deep into its wooded valley, rippling with its soft music over the big grey boulders on its way to the lowlands and the sea.

Ascending the steep hill by which the road passes over the Moor between Corndon Tor and Sharp Tor, we pulled up at a point which commanded a magnificent view across the brown, illimitable moorlands to where the green fields beyond spread out like patchwork towards Tor Bay. Here we consulted our large-scale map. Then, leaving the car, we divested ourselves of our dust-coats, and all three set out upon a walk over the Moor of a couple of miles or so, the Major guiding us by means of his compass.

The walk across the heather in the warm sunshine proved a somewhat tedious one. First we skirted the high Corndon Tor, from which we could see Widdicombe lying in the hollow, and then turned in a north-westerly direction.

"It's very unfortunate that our informant prefers to remain anonymous," Major Kellaway declared to me in his high-pitched voice as we walked. "Yet so many people who give information of suspicious cases prefer that their names should not be known."

"For fear of libel, I suppose," remarked Clotilde, with a laugh.

"Probably so," was the Major's reply. "But where the country's safety is concerned, the law of libel should not be considered. I always like a man, if he is a Briton, to give his name and address boldly."

The Major had a short time before been attached to the indoor staff at Whitehall, and had been through thousands of letters, some highly important, and others written by hysterical persons who believed that every foreign governess, waiter, bottle-washer, hairdresser, clockmaker, or the like, was a secret agent of the universal Spy Bureau in Berlin.

"If an informant is not open enough to give his name and the place where we can find him and question him, then I look upon his information with considerable doubt," I

said. "It is so easy for the ill-natured to use us for the purpose of paying off an old score upon an enemy. Human nature is always so very uncharitable."

"Quite so, Nettlefield," laughed the Major. "Yet, of course, in this case nobody has been denounced by our mysterious informant. We are only advised to go and inquire for ourselves."

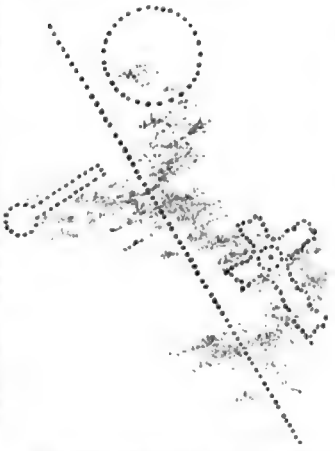
"But it is all so mysterious," exclaimed Clotilde, walking at my side, the ends of her blue motor-veil streaming in the freshening breeze.

"Ah, that is to be decided," the Major observed, taking some papers from the capacious pocket of his golf-coat. "Of course, we don't know if anybody may be lurking hereabouts and watching us. If so, then all our efforts will certainly be abortive. To my mind we have been put upon a very important line of information by somebody who knows the truth from the enemy's side, yet who desires to remain in oblivion. Remember that the post-mark of the letter which informs us is that of Honfleur—somebody living in France who is acquainted with the secret of the activity of German spies amongst us."

"I would have preferred him to have given us his name boldly," I declared bluntly. "A dozen cases of suspicion I've investigated lately, and all the cases where the information given had been anonymous proved to be without foundation. It seems that the publicity of the spy-peril has aroused everyone who has a personal grudge against his neighbour to denounce him as a dangerous secret agent, and leave us to make inquiries."

"True, Harry," replied the girl walking at my side. "But in this case there can, as the Major points out, be no personal grudge. Remember what the letter says. I wonder where the exact spot can be?"

All three of us paused, gazing eagerly about us over the great expanse of purple heather.



A facsimile of the design wrought in stones on a lonely hill on Dartmoor, which was found by Harry Nettlefield and his colleagues, and which was traced to a gang of German spies who had devised it for nefarious purposes.

The Major, consulting his papers again, said:

"I'm sure the spot must be somewhere near here—a lonely spot, too. There isn't a road or public path for quite a mile. The nearest, according to the map, is a mile away on the left, a footpath leading down to Widdicombe."

From the spot where we stood we could see for many miles around, away north to Okehampton, and south to Brent Tor. Below, Dartmoor was spread out like a panorama of purple hills and dales, glowing in the mellow orange light of the declining day.

The Major once more referred to the confidential correspondence and the roughly-drawn plans which had accompanied it, readjusting his glasses as he read. For some time we considered them together. Then at last, after examining our surroundings, noticing a small depression, we decided to advance and mount the heather-clad hill before us.

"My own belief is that we shall find it on the top of that hill yonder," said the Major, as all three of us went forward again; and, ten minutes later, when we came out upon a broad stretch of rough grass, Clotilde gave vent to an ejaculation of surprise which caused us to halt and gaze about us with wide-open, eager eyes.

We had at last gained the exact spot which our anonymous informant had indicated—the spot where a strange truth became revealed.

What we saw astounded us.

Upon the coarse grass, flints, as big as one's fist, had been laid out in a perfectly straight line pointing due north and south, as our compass at once told us.

A little to the right of the line, slightly towards the north, was traced a large and perfect circle, with stones which had

been brought from a small, bare depression close by. I judged this circle to be about twelve feet in diameter. On the left of the straight line was laid out a smaller circle, about three feet six across, with a long parallel kind of arm.

Immediately south of the large circle had been traced a huge cross, also in stones, in the centre of which was a small circle.

Together we walked from design to design, all of us sorely puzzled. Laid out there, on the top of that hill, at a spot which no one ever visited, those two circles, the line, and the cross certainly possessed some mysterious significance, but what it could be was an absolute enigma.

At my request, Major Kellaway handed me the anonymous letter which had been received at the War Office, a badly-written, rather ill-spelt communication from someone who had apparently discovered the curious design by accident. But though we had found it, according to the unknown person's directions, I confess that I was not altogether satisfied that it was not a hoax being played upon us by some practical joker. It would not be the first hoax played upon the War Office, by any means.

Yet, so remarkably neatly were the designs traced, and so evenly had the stones been placed, that, as I began to examine them carefully, I soon came to the conclusion that it was not a hoax.

"We'll measure them very carefully," the Major said, drawing out a tape which he had brought in his pocket. And, gazing about him, he pointed out that the grass had been considerably trampled down in the vicinity.

Together we examined the ground, and discovered there were footmarks imprinted after the earth had been softened by rain, marks of men's heavy boots with nails in them.

Suddenly Clotilde, who was some distance from me, close to the head of the design of the cross, shouted:

"Come and look here, Harry," and I saw her throw herself upon her knees and examine the ground closely.

In a few seconds I was at her side, and saw what she had discovered—the perfect imprint of a woman's small shoe with French heel.

"A girl has been here, evidently," she said. "Look yonder!"

And, gazing in the direction she indicated, I saw a second footprint.

That several persons had been at that lonely, out-of-the-world spot was quite evident. From our maps we ascertained that the nearest point to the sea was at Torquay—a distance of under seventeen miles, and it seemed to be in that direction that the arm of the smaller circle pointed.

Further investigations proved that behind a low clump of furze a fire had been lit recently, while in the bush itself a piece of greasy paper that had probably contained provisions had been caught. There were, indeed, signs of many journeys made to and fro from that bare patch whence the flints had been obtained, and we also came across an old sack, in which they had probably been carried up to the top of the hill.

The point was very high, and as the sun slowly lost its power, a chill, gusty wind blew up from the sea, for it is always fresh, even bleak, upon Dartmoor upon the warmest day in summer.

I assisted the Major to take exact measurements of that puzzling design.

The straight line of stones running from south to north was exactly 62 feet in length, being composed of much larger stones than the circles and cross. Indeed, all the biggest stones had been used to mark out the line, which had been most accurately laid out, evidently by a string being stretched from end to end. As a matter of fact we found the holes wherein the pegs had been stuck.

Next we turned our attention to the largest circle. Fortunately, I had carried my walking-stick from the car, and this I stuck up in the centre of the circle, from which we removed a great flat stone. Then, attaching a string to the stick, Clotilde took it, and, walking round the circle very carefully, found that the stones were set with amazing exactitude.

"Let us take down further measurements," the Major said, and we stretched the tape across.

"Eleven feet eight," Kellaway announced. "Just confirm it, Nettlefield, will you?"

I took the tape and found that he was quite correct in his measurements.

He pencilled it in his pocket-book, and while Clotilde was searching for further evidence of the mysterious persons who had traced out the very curious designs, we turned our attention to the second circle—the one with the arm stretching from it. Its diameter, we found, was 3 feet 4 inches, while the length of the arm was 10 feet 2 inches, the width being exactly 12 inches.

Next we turned our attention to the cross, of which we carefully took measurements at

each angle, as well as of the diameter of the small circle within it. But very soon we discovered that the stones had not been placed there with any accurate precision. It was just a roughly-designed cross, the circle in the centre being quite irregular, yet at the exact centre the grass seemed considerably discoloured.

"Look!" cried Clotilde. "It's brown, as though scorched. Is it not odd?"

Roughly, the length of the cross was about 16 feet, but, on measuring its arms, we found one of them to be quite 5 inches longer than the other. The precision of the design of the two circles was evidently wanting in the case of the cross.

All of us were puzzled, and as we stood there in the glorious blaze of sundown the expression on our countenances was that of mystery inexplicable. By mutual consent we had agreed that the design reported to us was, in itself, shrouded in mystery. But the fact of the exactness of the circles revealed that it was, after all, not a practical joke played upon our department at Whitehall, as we had at first suspected.

With Clotilde's aid I made a rough sketch of the design, putting in the measurements, while the Major resumed his search in the vicinity.

"It indicates something important, without a doubt," Clotilde said. "But what can it be?"

"Ah, that's the question," was my reply. "I wonder who sent us the information?"

"Somebody who watched the stones being placed there, I expect. But why did he hesitate to give his name?"

"For fear that the fact he had indicated the spot might leak out, with some unpleasant result to himself, I suppose," was my reply. "It is astonishing how many people are ready to give their fellows a stab in the back providing they can remain unsuspected."

We stayed there a full hour more, until the sunset had faded into an afterglow of grey and crimson, much puzzled by our curious discovery. Then, determined to report it to headquarters in London, we made our way—after locating the spot very carefully—over the wild moorland to where Day awaited us, and were soon on our way through Ashburton and Chudleigh, to Exeter, where we proposed to stay the night.

It was nearly nine o'clock before I sat down to dinner with Clotilde, the Major having gone across to the post-office to report our discovery by telephone to the War Office.

In half-an-hour he returned. From the expression upon his face I saw that something unusual had happened.

"Do you know, Nettlefield," he said, bending across the table as he whispered to me, "they say up at headquarters that an exactly similar design was found by some Territorials a fortnight ago on Pickering Moor, in Yorkshire, at a point about twelve miles from the sea. It was reported to the Intelligence Officer of the Division, who had measurements made, and then, it seems, he dismissed the affair as the ingenious work of somebody who had nothing better to do."

"And those measurements?" I asked.

"Curiously enough, they tally exactly with those we have taken," replied Major Kellaway.

There was no one else in the room, hence we were able to discuss in undertones our plan of campaign.

Kellaway had been silent for some time, making calculations with the stump of a pencil he had taken from his pocket.

Then he put it down suddenly with a sigh, saying:

"No, I really can't see, after all, what that curious design denotes, or what information it could convey to the enemy if—as it certainly seems to be—it is the work of spies."

Soon afterwards Clotilde rose, urging us to think out the problem, as she herself would endeavour to do, wished us good-night and left us.

But though I sat with Kellaway for an hour or so in the little smoking-room across the courtyard, and we discussed the affair from every standpoint, we could see no reason for the careful placing of those flints upon the grass.

Next morning Kellaway obtained from the office of the Chief Constable of Devon a list of the registered enemy aliens resident in the districts along the edge of that part of Dartmoor, namely, Bovey Tracey, Newton Abbot, Ivybridge, South Brent, Ashburton, and other places—a rather long list of names of Germans and Austrians of all classes. One registered German was put down as the owner of a large estate adjoining the moor between Cramber and Stannon, and he had in his employ six servants of German nationality, three men and three women.

It was an illuminating list, showing, as it did, that even along the edge of the wildest and most remote part of England, our friends, the enemy, were residing in full force, and in perfect liberty within their five-mile radius.

In a few seconds I was at her side, and saw what she had discovered—the perfect imprint of a woman's small shoe with French heel. "A girl has been here, evidently," she said.

[Page 249, col. 2.]

That day we spent, in the guise of summer motorists of course, visiting various houses in which registered aliens were living along the south-east limits of Dartmoor. We went to Bovey Tracey, South Brent, and Ivybridge, and then north through Dean Prior to Cramber Park, where lived the German, Wilhelm Scharer, with his family and six servants.

The estate was a fine one, high upon Cramber Hill, part of it well wooded, and part a great undulating park of rich grasslands, which stretched away to the valley of the Dart—a spot full of natural beauties, with the river, a famous stretch of salmon water, winding through the picturesque grounds.

The distance between the great white house, with its palm-garden at the side, which we could see against a background of woods, and the spot where the curious design had been traced, was perhaps a full ten miles over the Moor. But by road it would have to be approached from Dean Prior, and would be quite double the distance.

Leaving the Major with Day in the car, Clotilde and I ventured into the park in the direction of the house. The Major hesitated to accompany us, declaring that we, as lovers, would not be suspected of any inquisitiveness if challenged, while his own military appearance might betray him.

So, while the car moved off to a rendezvous higher up the road, we went in by a side gate, where there was no lodge, and sauntered quietly up to the house.

There seemed nobody about. Indeed, most of the blinds were down, and it was evident that the family were away. At last, as we were passing along a pretty rhododendron walk, we met a man, evidently an undergardener.

"I hope we're not trespassing here?" I said pleasantly. "What a lovely place this is!"

"Well, sir, you be trespassing," replied the man, with his broad Devonshire accent, which I cannot attempt to imitate. "But nobody'll take notice, because the maister, Mr. Scharer, be away to London, and there's only his secretary, Mr. Kruse, at home. He's just coming down the drive, sir, but he won't say anything if you keep straight on past the house and out by the moor gate."

I thanked him, and we went forward, meeting a moment later a fair-haired, middle-aged man in glasses and grey tweeds, a man whose clean-shaven, loose lips gave him rather an ugly expression. He took no notice of us as we passed, merely whistling a collie to heel, and halting for a moment to light a cigarette.

We had a good look at the house as we passed, especially at the chimneys, for such a person as this Mr. Scharer might easily possess a secret wireless station. But though our quick eyes searched everywhere, we could detect no sign of any aerial wires or of any having ever existed.

The walk back to the car was quite a pleasant one, but when we met the Major we had to report that we could discover nothing suspicious.

Through nearly a whole week we continued to inquire and watch the registered Germans and Austrians in that district of Devonshire. At all hours of the day, and of the night, singly and in company—Day, our chauffeur, also helping us—we prosecuted our inquiries untiringly, afraid openly to visit the Two Circles for fear of arousing suspicion.

Alas! all our efforts were in vain. As far as we could ascertain, all those who had been registered were perfectly law-abiding persons, to whom no suspicion could attach.

So open was the spot where the circles and cross were marked that it was impossible to approach without being seen by anyone who chanced to be watching from one of the neighbouring hills, a fact which one day, while we were resting after lunch in the Royal Hotel at Plymouth, caused me to ponder.

Why should we not find a point from which we ourselves could watch, while lying hidden in the heather?

I suggested this to Kellaway, and soon we were both poring over maps and examining contours. That evening, taking some sandwiches and flasks from the hotel, we set forth in the car once again, and, having dined in Ashburton, we proceeded as it grew dark towards the point where we decided to keep vigil.

"If anything goes on there, it goes on at night," Clotilde declared as, leaving the car and carrying with us our heavy coats and a couple of rugs, we set forth in the failing light to climb a hill whence we believed we could obtain a view of the spot of mystery.

Day we had ordered to go forward about two miles further, in the direction of Princetown, with instructions to tell any inquisitive person that he had run out of petrol and was awaiting some from Dartmeet.

A stiff climb, in which we tore our clothes

sadly in the briars and gorse, brought us at last to the point of vantage, darkness having now fallen, with the stars shining brightly overhead. The silence on the great lonely moor was intense, for it was a close, warm night, though a slight mist had arisen in the valley between where we watched and the cone-shaped hill before us whereon that mysterious design of the circles was set out.

Spreading our waterproof rugs on the grass, we seated ourselves, conversing in low tones. Then with great care that we should show no light, I managed to get a cigarette going, both Kellaway and Clotilde lighting theirs from mine.

We were a merry trio, yet the eyes of all three of us were fixed in the direction of that dark peak showing black against the night sky.

For hours we sat chatting, smoking, and watching. The only sounds which broke the dead quiet were the shrill cry of some night-bird and now and then the distant note of a motor-horn far off on one of the main roads, while once we heard the warning siren of some steamer out at sea.

The Major's luminous watch on his wrist showed two o'clock in the morning when, about ten minutes later, Clotilde, who was watching while we chatted — we having arranged to watch in turn — exclaimed suddenly:

"Why, what's that? There's a light over there! See!"

And, surely, as we looked we saw a bright, intense white light, showing like a star in the darkness. Indeed, so brilliant was it that, in the low, light mist its rays showed upwards, like the beams of a miniature searchlight.

"That's curious," remarked the Major, as we both jumped up to gaze at the light, which showed quite steadily skyward.

For another quarter-of-an-hour we watched the unwavering stream of brilliance.

"There must be somebody over there," I said, turning to the Major. "If you'll stay here with Clotilde I'll go forward and see what I can."

"I'll come, too," said my *fiancée* eagerly.

"No. It is best for you to stay. One person can creep up better than two or three."

At first Kellaway wanted to come, but at last I had my own way, and, in the darkness, descended the hill into the misty valley—a somewhat dangerous exploit, for I knew that at a certain spot in the depression was a morass, in which, if I ventured, I should become quickly engulfed. Therefore I kept upon sloping ground all the while, making rather a wide *détour* until at last in about half-an-hour I began to ascend the other hill, on the top of which the design was laid out.

Creeping forward with infinite care, my body bent so as not to show against the sky-line, I went on through the heather, though the noise I made seemed horrible.

For a long time I failed to reach any point whence I could see what was in progress, until, of a sudden, I saw before me three figures—the figures of two men and a woman—and heard some dull, metallic, clinking sounds. There were two horses with them, from which they seemed to be unloading something, but I was not near enough to ascertain what it could be.

Nearer I crept, and presently I heard the woman's shrill voice calling one of her companions—speaking in German!

Then I hesitated. They were bending down, doing something on the ground. Perhaps they were making another device in stones!

One of the men was crossing in my direction, therefore I dropped quickly into the heather, for the moon had just shone forth with irritating clearness, and would have revealed my presence.

I waited, holding my breath. He came straight towards me, and as he passed I peered out to try and catch a glimpse of his features. Fortunately he was walking in the full light, and as he passed I discerned that he wore glasses and walked with a slight stoop.

In an instant I recognised him as Mr. Scharer's secretary—the man Kruse! He seemed to be searching around for something.

To remain there was dangerous if I wished to avert discovery; therefore, after carefully marking the spot where the two horses stood, and where the woman and her companions were at work, I made the best of my way back to my friends, and described what I had seen.

Clotilde heard me breathlessly, and urged that we should all go and watch. But Kellaway at once counselled patience.

"We will go there in the daytime when they will not be watching. We may then discover the truth," he said. "Something is in the wind, and we shall now be able, I hope, to solve the mystery."

On tiptoe with excitement we waited at Ashburton till next day at noon, when all

three of us set out for the spot I had marked in the darkness.

We experienced very considerable difficulty in finding it, for I had to take my bearings from our place of concealment, and things always look so different in daylight.

At last, however, we found marks of horses' hoofs, quite different from those of the shaggy moor-ponies, and we also found the prints of nailed boots and French heels. Then, while examining all the clumps of yellow gorse in the vicinity, Clotilde, ever eager and active, being some distance in advance of us, suddenly cried out as she knelt down and looked into a great mass of bracken and gorse:

"Why, look here! Quick!"

We both dashed to her side, and there saw that there was concealed, at that spot, a great store of cans of petrol, which had evidently been carried up there by pack-horses night after night.

The serious truth was instantly revealed, yet we touched nothing, and motored back at once to Ashburton to report by telephone to London.

From Whitehall the wires were quickly at work, and that night a hundred soldiers, with their officers kept watch with us upon the Moor, all of them concealed in the heather, for it was plain that the line of stones and the cross—which was proved to have been painted with some luminous substance—were a mark for the landing of hostile aeroplanes. The measurement of the two circles—which the Major worked out—showed that the diameter was in the proportion of as 7 to 2, and reckoning by the length of the arm of the smaller circle, which was 10 feet 2 inches long, it gave the figures as 427 inches.

At a distance of 427 inches from the centre of the smaller circle, in the direction of the arm, we discovered nothing. It had, however, no doubt been pre-arranged that in the final measurement inches should be read as feet, for it was at a distance of exactly 427 feet that the secret petrol-base had been hidden.

At early morning, surely enough, the German secret agents came about one o'clock, lit their acetylene-lamp in the centre of the circle within the luminous cross, as a guiding mark, or beacon, for their Taubes or Zeppelins, and soon afterwards brought up the two horses laden with more motor-spirit, when suddenly, at an exciting moment, they were arrested. Next day, search was made by us 427 feet away from the mysterious circle on Pickering Moor, up in Yorkshire, where we found a second petrol-base.

A week later, at a secret court-martial held in Plymouth, William Scharer, gentleman, his daughter, Erna Scharer, a girl of twenty-five, his secretary, Heinrich Kruse, and his chauffeur, a man named Schmidt, were all sentenced to long terms of penal servitude, which they are at present serving.

Reports were sent to the daily newspapers concerning the affair, but the Press Censor promptly—and even perhaps wisely—forbade their publication.

(There will be another exciting story of spy hunting next month, in which Harry Nettlefield adds still further to his laurels.)

THE TRAGEDY.

When Marceline was seventeen
  And I was twenty-two,
I owned an eight-horse twin machine
That hauled a side-car emerald green
  (Oh, fair, prophetic hue!)—
And through the country, out of sight,
We blinded like a streak of light.

Now Marceline is twenty-two
  And twenty-seven I am,
The motor-bike is gone (boo-hoo!);
I sold her—nothing else would do—
  To buy—ah me!—a pram.
For, oh! to wed I was beguiled,
And now we have an angel child.

Yet still, in dreams—my watch in pawn—
I motor on from dusk till dawn.

F. E. B.

Her Highness

"Yet this inconstancy is such
As you, too, shall adore;
I could not love thee, dear, so much
Loved I not honour more."

By Owen Oliver.

Joy's people, and other people, thought that it was very foolish to be so much in love, but Joy thought that it was "very nice." That was how she spoke of it to them when they teased her, but when she spoke to herself she called her love "a glory." Hers ought to be a great love, she told herself, because it was all she had to give, and his must be great because he was giving her everything.

She often wondered that a clever, handsome, wealthy man of the world, who might have married a grand lady, should choose such an ordinary girl. Her one fear was that some day he might wake up from his dream and notice that she was only just like anybody else. She often puzzled before her mirror what it was that he saw in her.

Joy had never had much conceit of herself, and she could not realise that the features she criticised one by one as a whole made up a face like a flower, as he had told her. She had still less notion that her little tendernesses and sweetnesses and foolishnesses made up a very worshipful woman. The idea that she could influence His Highness—that was her name for her lover—in any of

"Couldn't you say a word to him to stop the cruel thing, and — and let other people live? They've as much right to as he!" (Page 958, col. 1.)

the big concerns of life had never entered her head. She was frankly amazed when people came and urged her to write to him concerning some business affair that she did not understand.

He had gone away for a few days about one of his big deals, and there was a great commotion in the town over some combine that he had proposed in his masterful manner just before he left.

"You can think over it and we'll discuss it when I come back," he had told them. And the more they thought over it the less they liked it.

"I don't know, Joy," her father said, "whether Bryant has spoken to you about this amalgamation that he proposes?"

"Why no, daddy!" she disclaimed. "He wouldn't worry my silly head with business. He'd be afraid to let me talk about it for fear he'd find out how stupid I am."

"You aren't so stupid as you think," her father assured her, "and I consider you ought to know about this. He wants to force a dozen houses—ours among them—into a syndicate with him. Under the arrangements he puts forward he would have the control of the whole thing."

"So he ought to have!" Joy asserted. "He's fifty times cleverer than everybody else."

"Umph!" Her father took a long pull at his pipe. "He's clever enough. That's the strongest reason against it. He'd take the lion's share."

Joy laughed.

"Being the lion!" she said. One of her soft hands wandered to the locket at her neck, where a portrait of His Highness was enshrined.

"I was thinking of the lambs," her father remarked drily. "Of course, I don't suppose he'd eat his future father-in-law. Perhaps he'd even offer me a few lamb bones! But I'm not carnivorous, not a cannibal, anyhow! They're people I've dealt with all my life, and I can't shut my eyes to the fact that the combine will be a bad thing for the rest of them, and for the town."

"Then why amalgamate, daddy? That's the right word, isn't it? I suppose Harvey can't make people if they don't want to."

Her father shook his head.

"You don't understand, child. We are competitors at present, and he is bigger than all the rest of us, and has far more capital at his back. He could afford to lose more than all we have—and he'd do it—to undersell us and squeeze us out if we didn't accept his terms. They are hard terms, Joy, bad for our office staff and workmen as well as for ourselves. I daresay he'd tell you it was all in the way of business if you asked him, but——"

"But I shouldn't!" Joy cried in horror. "He might think I didn't trust him! I expect he'd be—not angry only—well, I should get it all wrong, and he'd smile and say: 'Hadn't you better leave business to me, little girl?' And I should say, 'Yes, Harvey.'"

"If you asked him to discuss it with you, he would," her father insisted, "and perhaps a word or two from you, even in your ignorance, might have an influence on him. He's certainly fond of you."

"Why, of course!" Joy played with the locket again. "He'd be foolish enough to let me persuade him about some things, but not about business. It wouldn't do any good if I tried to argue with him about things I don't understand, only show him a little more of my silliness. Besides, Harvey is sure to do what is right. I know him."

Her father smoked silently for a long while.

"It's a curious thing," he remarked, "but the simplest woman fancies that she knows the deepest man! Well, I don't want to disturb your dreams, pet, but you put your 'Highness' rather on a pedestal."

Her mother was the next to broach the subject. She approached it from a different position.

"I used to say that you hadn't a scrap of sentiment, Joy," she observed, "but it seems that I was wrong."

Joy played with her locket. She never forgot that Bryant's portrait was inside all the time he was away, and not often at other times, unless the original was with her.

"It seems so, mummy," she confessed. "Well, I'm glad. Aren't you?"

"Sentiment is a very good thing if you can keep it, but, if it becomes too one-sided, the sentimental one is likely to suffer, Joy. A woman ought to have some influence over her future husband."

"In some things," Joy agreed.

"In all things," her mother corrected firmly. "Well, all questions of right and wrong. To my mind, this combine that he's trying to force all the firms into is monstrous."

"Mother!"

Gentle little Joy seemed to bristle.

"If you would take the trouble to understand it—your father could enlighten you much better than I—and form your own judgment——"

"I don't want to understand it," Joy declared quickly. "It would seem as if I thought it necessary to judge Harvey, and I am quite sure that he will only do what is right."

"He would be more sure to do it if you had more influence with him."

"The influence I am going to have with him is that I leave it to his honour—and love—to do the right thing by the girl who loves and trusts him. I don't mind who knows. I do!"

Her mother sighed.

"He is years older than you," she said, "and sometimes I wish that you weren't marrying him. Of course, it is a splendid marriage from a worldly point of view, and, so far, your father and I are pleased, but we always thought more of your happiness than of wealth or position. If you have no influence over Harvey now, you won't have much when you are married, Joy. Aren't you ever afraid?"

"Sometimes," Joy owned. "Yes. I wonder whether he will find out what a very ordinary girl I am, but I think he will know that my love for him is much more than ordinary, and, you see, perhaps that is what he wants most from me, dear, and *will* influence him. It isn't that I won't take trouble to understand about the combine. It would be disloyal to Harvey to try to investigate his dealings, and perhaps loyalty is what he wants, too."

"You approach everything from *his* point of view," her mother complained, "but you're obsessed by him, and it's no use arguing with you."

Her brother spoke to her an hour later. She was lying on the sofa reading, with one hand on her precious locket. (It had been open a moment before.)

"I don't want to say anything against Bryant," he began.

"You'd better not!" she cried, and dropped the book and sat bolt upright.

Her brother stood looking down at her and grinning.

"If you were six inches taller," he said, "and half a waistbelt bigger round, you'd be a majestic person, Midget. No, I'm not going to attack His Highness, so you needn't get your claws out. He's a white man, but, Joy, this combine's going to hit people hard."

"Then it's their fault, not his."

Joy's gentle mouth set firmly.

"It isn't only the manufacturers. There are the clerks. You see, if he amalgamates offices——"

"It will be because offices want amalgamating. I'm not going to discuss it. What Harvey does is sure to be right, Stewart."

Stewart whistled and pulled at his moustache. Presently he patted his sister's shoulder in the affectionate way that gave him a power over her which no one else had till her lover came, and love snatched them both up in a whirlwind.

"Some people wonder what he sees in you," he remarked. "Now, I don't! I don't altogether wonder that you like him, either. I think better of Bryant than most people do, Joy girl!"

"Thank you! Nice old Stewart!"

"But there was never a man who didn't need a little influence to keep him from running business—perfectly legitimate and straight business—a trifle too hard sometimes. Any fellow is liable to see his own side of the case in a brighter light than he sees other people's."

"Well, Harvey's sure to see both sides better than *I* do. He wouldn't let me influence him against his own judgment; not in business things, anyhow."

"I think he would, even in business, funny little sis. If you'd let me explain the affair to you."

"No, no, no! It would be disloyal to Harvey even to listen. You wouldn't listen to a word against Maud, Stewart; not a word that implied that she needed considering! *I won't!* There! Let's go and call for her, shall we?"

They went out and called upon her brother's *fiancée*, and Joy slipped off and left them in their Garden of Eden—four shrubs with a seat between, hidden from view. (Maud wouldn't have the shrubs cut!) She met Kate Royce who was at school with her, and recently engaged to Teddie Mills, and Kate caught her by the arm.

"Oh, Joy!" she said. "Teddie's so worried about this combine. Everyone says they'll amalgamate offices and reduce, and he's quite a junior. If he had to go he might be out of a berth till he'd spent all he has put by, and then it would be years and years before we could save enough for our house, and—*you'll* be able to marry soon, I suppose?"

"Next spring," Joy owned. She held her locket, flushed, and smiled.

"You've grown prettier, Joy," Kate remarked. "*I'm* worrying myself into a fright."

"Oh, *no*, dear!"

"I am; and it's all over this horrid syndicate or combine or whatever it is they call it. Nobody wants it, but your Mr. Bryant is forcing it on them. Couldn't you say a word to him to stop the cruel thing, and—and let other people live? They've as much right to as he!"

Kate's voice was passionate.

"Harvey knows much better than I what is right," Joy said steadily, "and he is sure to do it. He is the best judge of whether amalgamation is necessary. Of course, I will tell him that Teddie is an old friend of mine, and is saving up to marry one of my very best friends. He will not need asking any more than that. Teddie will be all right."

"But it isn't only Teddie, Joy. There's my father, and my brothers, dozens of the boys that you and I knew. They're all expecting to be the ones to lose their jobs. It will ruin the place if it comes off, and they daren't oppose him. He's so much richer than they and so much cleverer. He's just going to squeeze the money out of their pockets into his, and——"

"You forget that I am engaged to him!" Joy cried. "Perhaps you do not know the reason that I am! I love him, and I trust him. You have heard a lot of wicked falsehoods!"

"Don't be angry, Joy," her friend pleaded. "I don't mean that he is doing anything that he hasn't a right to do, or that he wants to hurt people. He just doesn't realise what it means to us. Mother's always crying because father thinks he'll have to go. When they amalgamate they get rid of the old ones first, he says. Couldn't you make Mr. Bryant understand and influence him not to do such a wicked thing?"

"He does not need my influence to make him do whatever a kind and honourable man should," Joy said firmly. "I am not angry, but I trust him absolutely. Good-bye, Kate. I'll speak to him about Teddie, of course."

She walked on with her head in the air. When she came to a quiet corner of the park she opened the locket and kissed the portrait of a stern-faced man, many years her senior.

"Dear 'Highness'!" she whispered as if she comforted a prince unjustly attacked. "Dear 'Highness'!"

Her uncle and the doctor [illegible] on her way home, and they also alluded to the combine. It was going to ruin the town, they declared. It would put old men out of work and drive young men from their native place to seek their fortunes elsewhere, and she ought to persuade her *fiancée* not to do it. She refused to interfere, with a decision which showed them a new side of the gentle, childish girl whom they had loved since she was a baby.

"I cannot discuss Harvey's business affairs with anybody," she told them, "not even with such dear friends as you, except to say that whatever he does will certainly be right."

Joy refused to read the local paper when it came that evening, though she usually devoured the news of the town. She expected that there would be an article about the proposed combine. She was not in the least afraid that any article could convince her against her lover on the slightest detail, but she preferred to "trust him blind."

"I shall refuse to talk about the combine with anyone in future," she told her mother. "I shall try not to be rude to them, but I am getting angry. Other people don't know Harvey, and I do."

She avoided discussion—and rudeness—with a number of people, but she could not get away from three of them. Mills, her father's old foreman, and husband of her old nurse, came the next day to beg a few words with Miss Joy.

"Time was, Missie," he said, sitting in the chair that her kind hands had placed for him, "when you used to run to me to mend the toys you had broken—little, mischievous, destructive thing you were!—and sit on my knee, and feel for sweets in my pockets. You'll listen to a word from old Mills, won't you? It's about what they call the combine."

"I'll listen to you about anything else, Mills," she said, "but that is Mr. Bryant's business. I have absolute confidence in him."

"I'm not speaking against him, Missie. It's just business to Mr. Bryant. He sees a way of making something out of the power his money gives him, and 'Why not?' he says. No reason why not, as far as he's concerned, but it will be just ruin to some of us working folk. It's like this, you see——"

"Please don't, Mills!" she cried. "I can't discuss it, really I can't. I shall tell Mr. Bryant that you are a dear old friend, and I want him to see that you always have

The lovers met upon the stairs, the staid financier running up, and his girlish sweetheart running down. [*Page 361, col. 1.*]

a good place. He will look out that you have it, I'm quite, quite sure, Mills."

"I wasn't thinking of myself, Missie. I'm an old man now, and my children are out in the world, and my wife and I have saved enough to keep us from starving. But I've a feeling for those I've worked with for forty odd years, man and boy. There are hundreds likely to be put on reduced wages or go, people you've known since you were a baby, some that nursed you then, some you've seen grow up as you've grown—and always a kind word from you to them, and them to you. There'll be hungry men and women and children, and the young lads leaving the place. Some of us have talked it over, and we thought how the only hope was you. If you'd only use your influence with him, Miss Joy. Everyone says that he worships you."

"Mills," Joy cried, "I cannot, *cannot* listen any more. I do not mind asking Mr. Bryant to do a favour to any of my friends. He will like to do it, to please me. But I cannot presume to criticise his business plans. He is so very, very many times wiser than I. I do not even understand exactly what the combine is, but I am quite sure that whatever he does will be right."

"Even if it means people thrown out of work and leaving the place where they were born and bred?" Mills demanded bitterly.

"Even then," Joy said steadily, though her lips were white. "But I don't believe it will be like that."

"Missie, it will. I've seen these combines before, and it's part of the plan he's laid down to——"

"Mills," Joy said, "I won't listen to any more. It would be absurd of me to argue with Mr. Bryant about his business, and you are mistaken about him. He will do everything that is right, you will find."

The minister came to tea, and asked afterwards for a few minutes' talk with Joy. He was no judge of business, he declared, and only a servant of the Judge of men. Mr. Bryant would certainly do nothing that was not honest and honourable and allowable in business, but perhaps if it were pointed out to him that a course quite within his rights might, nevertheless, cause great loss and hardship to a large number of worthy people, and injure the town where his little sweetheart whom we all love was born and bred, he might feel disposed chivalrously to forego some of the things which are due to Cæsar. If Joy would influence him——

"No, no!" she cried. "I know nothing of business. I cannot think it necessary for me to interfere. He will do what is chivalrous without any word from me. *Nothing* would induce me to hurt him by the suggestion that I do not entirely trust him. You see, *I do!*"

The minister sighed and took his hat.

"We are all better for love and trust, my dear," he said. "I think yours will be a great help to your lover. I did not mean that you should argue with him—he is a very clever man, I know, and I think a fair one—only help him to do right. We all need help sometimes. Perhaps if you wrote to him and said that many friends had spoken to you about this matter, which is causing great anxiety in the town; that you did not understand it, but that you trusted him to have every consideration for the feelings of others? If you wrote that——"

"It would show that I did *not* trust him," Joy cried, and she adhered to that with the obstinacy of a gentle woman, though her parents joined in the minister's entreaties before he went.

As a last resort they sent for her old schoolmistress, the woman whom Joy revered and looked upon as the Solomon to solve all the riddles of life, but even she could not move her old pupil in this matter, though she exercised all her gentle tactfulness.

"You would be right, darling Mrs. Deedes," Joy said, "if he were anyone else, but he is himself, and, dear, it would not only be disloyal of me to write and ask him to do what he is sure to do of his own accord, it would be so foolish. He understands it all so much better than I. It would be worse than foolish. It would hurt him!"

When Mrs. Deedes had gone, and Joy had finished a cry, she sat down in her dainty little room, with the opened locket perched on the inkstand, and wrote to her lover.

"My dear 'Highness,'" she began, and she wrote eight closely-filled pages telling him how high he was to her, and how very, very dear, but there was not a word about the combine from beginning to end.

"He will do what is right," she told herself without misgiving, "and, if other people say that it isn't, *I* shall know that it must be!"

He came home the following afternoon to the meeting to discuss the combine. He wired to Joy:

Train very late. Must go straight to Town Hall. Will come to you immediately after.

Joy put on a fresh white gown, and waited impatiently in the drawing-room, peeping round the corner at every vehicle. A taxi stopped at their door at last, but it was only her brother, back from the meeting. He rushed into the room, picked his sister up like a baby, and kissed her.

"Joy!" he shouted. "I take off my hat to Bryant! He's a white man; a *good* man! They all took off their hats and cheered him at the finish of the meeting. He hasn't squeezed anybody. No terms could be fairer, and things will hum with him at the head. Talk of reduction—we shall have to import men! He's going to *make* the place. You're a lucky girl, you—you Midget!"

"I knew I was," Joy said, "but I'm glad everybody else knows it, too! Did he look *quite* well?"

"You'll know in a minute," her brother told her. "Here's his car!"

The lovers met upon the stairs, the staid financier running up, and his girlish sweetheart running down. He put a strong arm round her, and almost carried her back to the drawing-room. It was some time before they talked any sense, and then——

"I'm so proud, proud, proud of you, Highness!" the girl said adoringly, and the strong man held her back a little way, and looked thoughtfully at her sweet face.

"About the combine?" he asked.

"Yes. They've been worrying and worrying and worrying me about it ever since you left, Highness."

"Have they, sweetheart? Afraid I was going to skin them, eh?"

"Yes. They wanted me to write to you about it, Highness, and tell you what to do! Wouldn't you have laughed at me?"

"Well, girlie, I might have laughed at what you told me to do." He touched her cheek.

"Would you have been angry?"

"No, darling. I'd like to know your opinion about anything."

"You're laughing at me! Yes, you are—let me look! Why, you're ever so serious, Harvey, dear. You don't think I ever doubted you? Of course, I told them that it would be absurd of me to advise such a clever man, and disloyal to dream that you needed any word from me to do just what was the best and kindest thing——"

"Oh, my dear!"

"And I wasn't disloyal in my heart, either. I *knew* you would do it——"

"Joy, darling——"

"And you have of your own accord! Dear Highness! Aren't you glad that I trusted you too much to put a word in my letters to influence you?"

"You did, Joy," he said, taking both her hands in his. "You put in three words."

The girl looked up at him in utter astonishment.

"Three words?" she asked. "Three words?"

"'My Dear Highness,'" he quoted very gravely. "Three words that will influence me all my life. Sweet little worshipper!"

His eyes flickered, and the girl kissed him gently, which she rarely did unasked.

"You thought that you had two lives in your charge now?" she suggested, "to make high and good, and you wanted more than ever to be—what your Highness is."

"What I am going to be," he corrected. "I—I'm afraid I wasn't much of a 'Highness' before. I'd like you to think that I was, but I'd rather be honest with the partner who is going to share all things with me, even to my honour, Joy."

"Even that," the girl said solemnly.

"So I will tell you of the big influence that you had in this. You were justified in your championship to some extent. I did not intend to be so brutal as people supposed. In the terms which I had drafted I took power to decide everything, but I did not intend to use the power unmercifully. Still I meant to be businesslike, as I called it. The terms which I conceded to-day are better for the combine, as a whole, and certainly better for their employees, but they are not so profitable for me personally. I wrote a fresh draft this morning after I had your letter. They are *your* terms, Joy, the gift that you give to the town where you were born, and where you are loved."

"Because I called you 'My Dear Highness!' Oh! You are!"

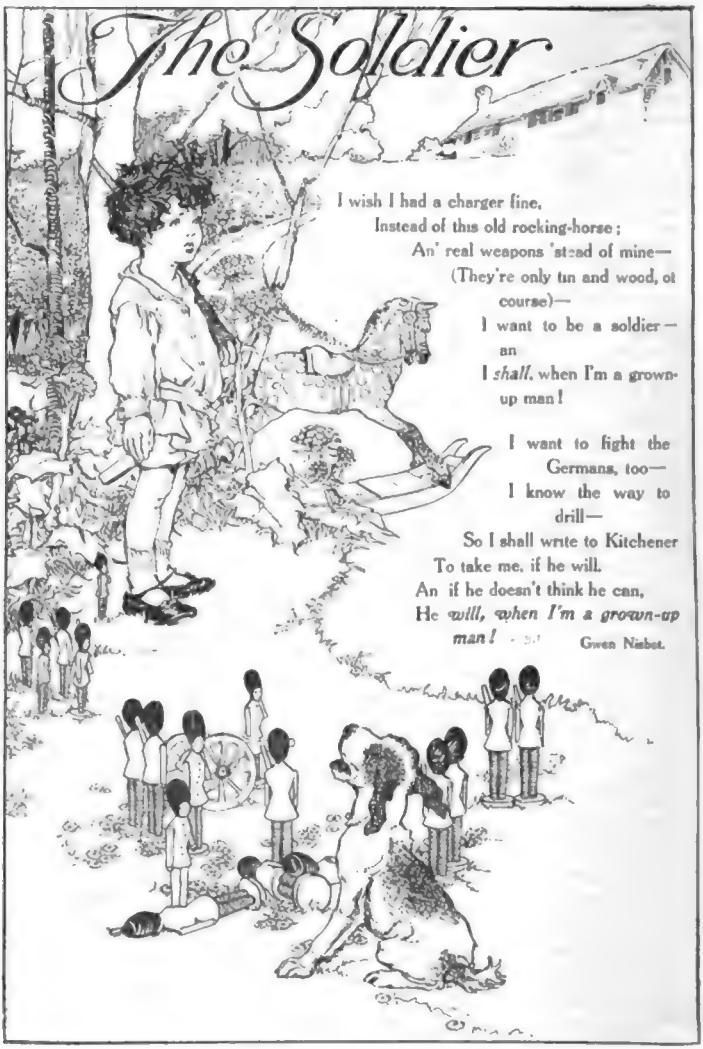
"I would be nothing less. Only a prince should win my princess."

"Such a very silly little princess, but a loving one!"

"And a loved one. The old draft was before me, on my desk, and I held your letter in my hand. 'My dear Highness,' I read again and again, and I tore up the old hard terms. 'Her Highness shall do no unprincely deed,' I said. No prince ever, Joy, but for your faith in me, higher than the man I should have been!"

The stern face quivered, and the girl drew it down on her soft shoulder, as if she mothered the strong man

"Oh!" she cried. "My *dear* Highness!"


The Soldier
I wish I had a charger fine,
Instead of this old rocking-horse;
An' real weapons 'stead of mine—
(They're only tin and wood, of course)—
I want to be a soldier—an
I *shall*, when I'm a grown-up man!
I want to fight the Germans, too—
I know the way to drill—
So I shall write to Kitchener
To take me, if he will.
An if he doesn't think he can,
He *will, when I'm a grown-up man!*
Gwen Nisbet.

THE VICTIM

By

Margaret Cruttwell

"Why prate of peace, when, warriors all
We clank in harness into hall,
And ever bare upon the board
Lies the necessary sword?"

When the smart maid announced "Miss West," he rose from a low chair by the fire and stood waiting.

Myra West, her supreme self-confidence slightly dashed by his quiet air of stillness and expectation, walked towards him quickly, and rather nervously.

"I—er—I'm *so* glad I found you in!" she babbled. It was a formula familiarised by infinite repetition. She seemed to spend her life lately saying "I'm *so* glad I found you in!"

He did not advance to meet her, but his right hand made a movement towards her own. Entirely at ease, distressingly calm, he greeted Miss West, to that lady's inward amazement. This was something new—a real novelty.

In her crusade she encountered various types of greeting, from various types of greeters. Some blustered, some were rude, some were nervous, many were angry, though afraid to show it. But every "case," so far, had placed the whip in *her* hand, for his own flogging, because the shock of being caught off guard is always unnerving.

This reception was something entirely fresh to Miss West. For the first time she felt the whip was in the hand of her victim, and that she was likely to be gently, but firmly, beaten before the end of the interview. It was a horrid feeling, and Miss West disliked being made to feel horrid over anything.

What an odious man! Still, what could one expect from a shirker? If she could turn him from a coward into a hero in the course of half-an hour, she would have done a really fine action—even though he *was* an odious man.

"I'm so glad I found you in," she repeated in her sweet, clear voice. It was a voice created purposely for the destruction of the stronger sex.

"Yes?" remarked the victim. "Won't you——?" He motioned towards a huge armchair facing his own, and she sat down rather hurriedly. Her knees felt strangely weak, and she was not nervous as a rule.

When he had seated himself gravely, she looked straight into his eyes and smiled. Her teeth were really lovely; she relied on them where everything else failed.

"You are wondering what I am doing here?" she said, with forced brightness. "Of course, the fact that your maid announced me as Miss West conveyed nothing to you, because you don't know me, and you didn't expect me."

She paused dramatically, and smoothed her large ermine muff.

"That is quite true," the victim confessed. "I don't think I've ever had the pleasure of meeting you, and I certainly did *not* expect any visitors this afternoon. But——"

"Oh, it was hateful of me!" burst forth Miss West. "I know it was, for I practically *forced* my way in. I'm Myra West, and I'm——"

"It is kind of you to—to honour me, Miss West," said the victim.

He spoke so quietly, so gently, that she felt ashamed—for the first time. His pale, clear-cut features looked like marble, in repose; his long, delicate fingers clasped the arms of his chair, lightly yet firmly. And he looked at her, studying her pretty, earnest face with his deep-set, grey eyes. There was a brief silence; then she laughed—a strained, ugly sound.

"Not really kind," she murmured. "You see, I have an object in coming here. I've come on business."

Again she laughed, and shifted her glance,

uneasily, from his face to the carpet. She began to wish he would not look at her so continuously with that curious air of detachment, of expectation.

"Business? But this is interesting. Won't you tell me all about it?"

He leant forward slightly, his face lighting up with the extraordinary, sad smile that had almost frightened her when she made her bold entrance into this quiet room.

Myra West moistened her lips; they were uncomfortably dry and parched.

"I'll tell you all about it now," she promised. "I've come to talk to you seriously, because I'm *recruiting*."

She shot the word out, and flung herself back in a graceful, studied attitude to watch her bombshell hit its mark.

He started violently. With deep satisfaction she saw his long fingers close tightly on the chair-arms. For an instant he sat rigid, gazing at her. Then a long sigh, almost a groan, came from his closed lips. He raised his right hand slowly and passed it across his eyes, covering them momentarily.

When the hand dropped and she looked into those searching grey eyes once more, she could have sworn they were dim with tears.

"Recruiting!" he said, with an effort. "Ah! yes—I know that many ladies are devoting themselves to that splendid work. It is plucky of them."

That last sentence stung her. Pluck had not entered into it where she was concerned. Vanity, self-gratification, a delightful sense of power — those were the predominant forces that had impelled her to this recruiting crusade. The others were like her, if she knew them rightly—and he called it "pluck!"

"It must be difficult to tackle complete strangers," he continued, covering her rather too obvious embarrassment. "I think a girl who sets herself out to gain recruits, apart from her personal friends, is a real heroine."

Her eyes narrowed sharply. Was this bitter sarcasm? If so——

"Oh! we don't think of it from that point of view," she bragged. "It's not a personal matter at all. We just feel so mad to think there are strong, healthy men who haven't enlisted for various foolish reasons, and so——"

"As you haven't much to do, you spend your time recruiting! Splendid!"

This *was* sarcasm, undoubtedly. She flushed with anger, not noticing the whiteness of his lips, the tense lines round his mouth. She was such an unobservant little person, was Miss Myra West.

"It's not so easy as it seems," she flashed at him. "How would you like to be given a list of houses, and be obliged to get in somehow, by hook or by crook, insist on seeing the man of the house—or his sons—and point out to them that they are being silly cowards, and that they *must* enlist?"

"I should hate it," he admitted. "It must be a trying task."

She nodded vehemently. "It is, and sometimes people are—are just loathsome!" Her china-blue eyes, blazing with intense scorn, focussed themselves on his face. He did not obviously move a muscle.

"We had to invent a system," she proceeded. "Some girl friends have joined me, and we each choose a different street, and go from house to house until we have done that street thoroughly. Oh, we get heaps and heaps of recruits! They only want a little persuading!" Her smile was triumphant now.

"I'm sure they do—and you must be proud of your work."

She disregarded this statement.

"Let me finish telling you about our system, please. Having chosen a street, we get the post-office directory, and look up all the houses that have male occupants. We go to those first, and sometimes I go to the female tenants, too. They might be widows with several sons, or nephews, or something. It's really quite thrilling!"

"So you found my name in the directory?"

"Yes. I began this street yesterday, and it was your turn to-day. So I rang the bell and asked your maid boldly if you were in. One has to be bold over these things."

"I suppose so. What happened then?"

"She hesitated, and I felt *sure* you were, but perhaps didn't want to see people. So I said I knew you very well; confessed that you didn't expect me, but that it was a surprise visit, and that she *must* take me up and announce me straight away. Oh! I acted quite well, I really did. I'm getting accustomed to it, you see."

"Of course you are! So my maid announced you—and I think I know the rest," he concluded rapidly

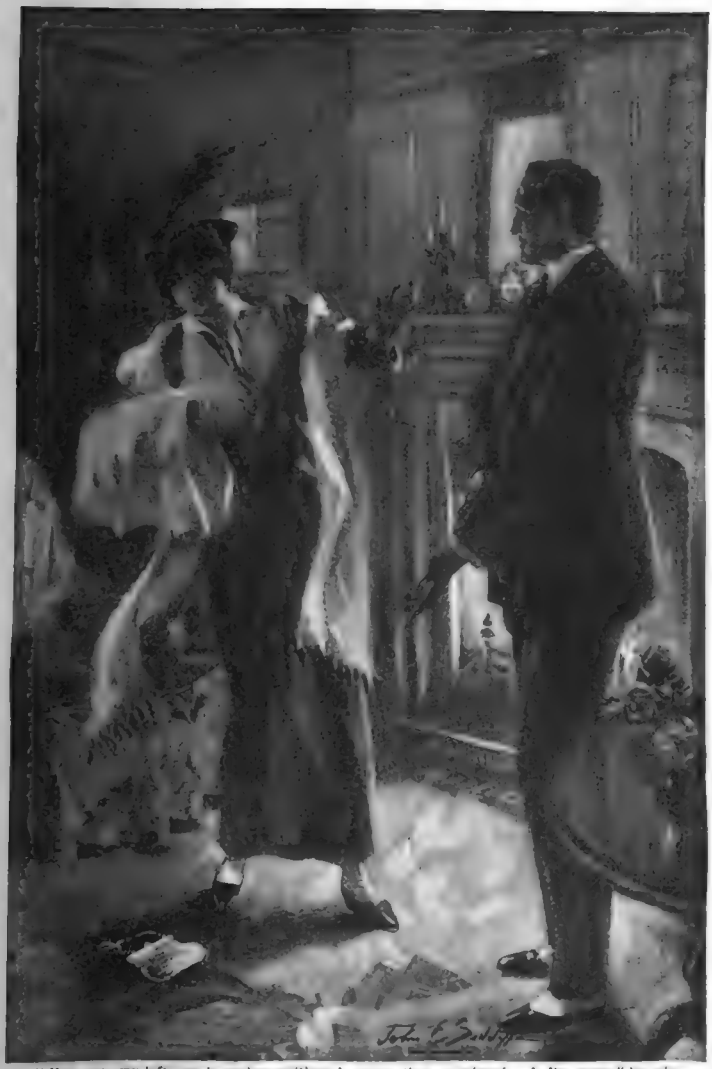
"You do, except the recruiting part. Now, have you joined any regiment? If not, why not?"

"I've not joined any regiment," he said very gently.

She raised an accusing finger.

"Aren't you ashamed?" she demanded, sure of her power to attract, to please.

"Not exactly ashamed. Very, very sorry."



"You see, my left arm is useless—withered—worse than paralysed. I I'm sorry," he said. The silence was terrible. Then, flinging out her hands, as though he had struck her, she moved backwards, gasping. [Page 266, col. 1.]

"*Sorry?*" If spoken words could burn, that single ejaculation should have scorched him to death. "You sit there calmly, in this comfortable warm room, while your countrymen are fighting and dying in the rain-soaked trenches, and you dare to say you're sorry!"

"It's the truth; I don't know any other word to take its place—I *am* sorry."

"How old are you?" she demanded.

"Thirty-two."

"Are you physically fit?" proceeded the catechiser.

"Yes."

"Are you married?" Her indifference was overdone.

"No."

"Then why aren't you a soldier—or going to be one?"

For a minute he seemed to be studying her intently. At last he spoke, with diffidence.

"In your crusade," he asked her, "have you ever made a mistake?"

"What do you mean?" she parried.

"Have you ever attacked a man who was forced to remain a patient civilian through no fault of his own?"

She looked rather frightened. "No—that is—yes; once. He—he wanted to join, he told me, but his mother was a widow, and he was her only son—her sole means of support. Why did you ask me that question?"

As she spoke, she noticed a silver vase, holding three crimson roses. It stood on a small table at his elbow, and the faint light from the window, shining through the petals, turned them blood-red. She shivered suddenly.

"It doesn't matter," she said, with dignified regret. "You seem to be thoroughly fitted for enlistment in every way, but as the idea evidently doesn't appeal to you, there's no sense in wasting any more time. You're rather a coward, though—aren't you?"

It was her last shot, her trump card.

With a sudden cry, he rose. As she faced him defiantly, the large silver bag in her muff slipped, clattering, to the floor. Stooping, he stretched out his left arm to raise the dainty toy, then drew back with a stifled exclamation of pain.

"What's the matter?" inquired Myra West coldly.

His eyes were very sad as he looked at her angry face.

"I—I'm so sorry. I forgot for a moment. You see, my left arm is useless—withered—worse than paralysed. I—I'm sorry," he said. The silence was terrible.

Then, flinging out her hands, as though he had struck her, she moved backwards, gasping.

"No—no—it isn't true! It *can't* be true!"

His slow smile lit his face. "I thought that once," he said. "Now I know that it *is* true, only too true."

"But—it looks—your hand looks—it seems all right."

"I know. Strangers never guess, if I am careful. I was an inventor; I dealt with high explosives. I was trying to perfect a new type of shell; something went wrong, and when I woke up my arm was useless. It has been useless ever since. I couldn't hold a rifle—you've no idea how helpless that sort of thing makes a man."

She was crying now, quietly, all her foolish airs and graces wiped away by the powerful fingers of tragedy.

"I—I'm so desperately ashamed," she said. There was nothing else to say just then. "Forgive me."

He shook his head. "Let me ask you first to forgive me," was his request. "I should have told you at the beginning. But I wanted you to stay; I wanted to hear you talk—you are so young, so fresh, so full of life. I wanted to paint a picture of you on my mind—a lasting picture. I thought, too, that you might have heard of my misfortune, and just wanted to discuss some branch of recruiting, or ask my help in a monetary way. Besides, if I confessed, you would have gone—gone so soon. Was it very mean of me?"

In the darkness her warm little hand sought and found his.

"When I came in," she whispered, "I pitied you in my heart, and called you my 'victim.' Pity me a little, if you can. I'm *your* victim now."

He shook his head.

"You've had a fruitless afternoon, haven't you?" he said in a low, sad voice. "A useless afternoon."

"Not if you forgive me; not if you will prove your forgiveness," said Myra West, with genuine earnestness.

"How?"

"Let me come again another day. I can talk about other things besides recruiting—and I'm not always quite as horrid as I've been to-day. Will you put up with me sometimes?"

For the first time his smile lost its pathos.

"D'you mean that? Do you *really*? I—I don't know how to thank you," he faltered; thus proving himself a *real* victim after all.

PICTURE PARAGRAPHS

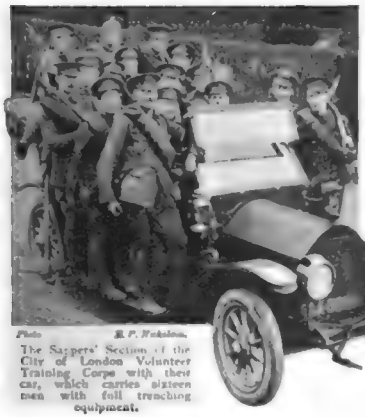


Photo R. P. Hoskins.

The Sappers' Section of the City of London Volunteer Training Corps with their car, which carries sixteen men with full trenching equipment.

The Editor will be Pleased to Purchase Photographs of an Interesting and Out-of-the-Way Nature. All Photographs should be Accompanied by a Short Description.

A-TRENCHING WE WILL GO!

THE Sappers' Section of the City of London Volunteer Training Corps can boast of a splendid motor, which will carry sixteen men with full trenching equipment.

Even with this load the car negotiated the steep Surrey hills, amid-t which the men were trained, with the greatest ease.

READY FOR AEROPLANES.

IT is not always easy to conceal the presence of guns from the enemy, but our "Tommies" are very ingenious, and achieve wonders in this direction. This British anti-aircraft gun, mounted on a motor lorry, has been almost entirely hidden under a haystack, while the surrounding trees also help to disguise the fact of its whereabouts.

Photo Underwood & Underwood.

"With the aid of a haystack and some trees, the British soldiers, ever resourceful, have contrived an effective shelter for their anti-aircraft gun and motor lorry.

Photo Emile Chevo.

The railway bridge of Varsovie, on the outskirts of Lodz, which was completely annihilated by the German bombardment, and found by the Russians an utter wreck, on their reoccupation.

HAVOC IN POLAND.

In Poland, as in Belgium, the German Army has left destruction and desolation in its train, whole towns and villages being wiped out by their remorseless guns.

The railway bridge of Varsovie on the outskirts of Lodz, is only one example of the havoc wrought by the enemy. The bridge was completely destroyed by the German bombardment, the rails falling over on each side of the pier. Thus, when the Russian Army reoccupied the place, they found the railway utterly useless.

THE CZAR OF ALL THE RUSSIAS.

The resemblance between King George V. and the Czar of Russia has always been extremely marked, and is very noticeable in this picture of the Czar talking to the Grand Duke Nicholas. The two monarchs are cousins, being united by ties of kinship as well as by the fact of fighting against a common enemy.

Photo Emile Chevo.

The Czar of Russia, our gallant Ally, whose armies have fought with such magnificent valour in the East, is here seen discussing some knotty point with the Grand Duke Nicholas.

Members of the Russian Red Cross Society driving through a dangerous part of Lodz with the Red Cross flag as protection.

THE RED CROSS TO THE RESCUE.

In the streets of Lodz it is no uncommon thing to see a *drosky* occupied by members of the Russian Red Cross Society intent on an errand of mercy. When passing through dangerous parts of the town the Red Cross flag is flown as a protection to the driver and occupants.

Judging by the picture, a *drosky* is scarcely an ideal vehicle in which to convey wounded, but the Russian Red Cross attendants in Poland have to do the best they can with the limited resources at hand in that stricken country.

SOLDIER AND SINGER TOO!

In Russia, as in England, men of all classes and professions have flocked to the colours. One of the most eminent is S. P. Sadossnikoff, the famous composer and singer of patriotic Russian songs.

M. Sadossnikoff, who is seen here in his national costume, is now in uniform, having offered his services in defence of his country.

M. Sadossnikoff is a famous Russian composer and singer of patriotic songs, who is now serving his country in a military capacity.

For Soldiers and Sailors Too

All the contributions on this page were sent in by officers and men serving in H.M. Forces. A pack of ROYAL playing-cards or a silver pencil-case is given for every accepted storyette, joke, bit of verse, or drawing sent in by a soldier or sailor. Please say which gift you prefer, and address envelopes to The C.O., ROYAL MAGAZINE, 18 Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

A CLEAN SWEEP.

The way they do things in some of the odd corners of the British Empire, where they are comparatively free from wireless telegrams, is unique if thorough.

The officer in charge of a certain hinterland received from his superior officer at the base some time in August last this message: "War has been declared. Arrest all enemy aliens in your district."

With commendable promptitude the superior officer received this reply: "Have arrested seven Germans, four Russians, two Frenchmen, five Italians, two Roumanians, and an American. Please say whom we're at war with."

MOBILISED PROVERBS.

You may lead a (British) force to the slaughter, but you cannot make it shrink.

* * *

Kit is not old that glitters.

* * *

Oil deferred maketh the bolt stick.

* * *

Take care of the boots and the feet will take care of themselves.

FROM A HERO'S POST-BAG.

A little girl, who sent a woollen muffler to a certain ship to be given to a bluejacket, wrote as follows:

"My dear Hero,—I am sending you this muffler I have made myself. I am seven years old, and teacher helped me. Dear Hero, I hope it will keep you warm on the North Sea. I hope you will catch the Kaiser and his wicked son. If you see any Germans in the water don't save them, push them further down.—Your loving little friend."

A LIMERICK.

There was a young bandsman at *YPRES*,
Whose flute was shot through by some SNYPRES.
The tunes that he played
Through the holes that they made
Astonished the Cameron PYPRES.

(*YPRES* must be pronounced *WIPERS*, à la Tommy.)

SOME MASCOT!

A battalion about to leave for the front was being presented with a mascot in the shape of a hound. The pleasant ceremony had been concluded; the hound's future keeper held him on a fancy leash; the colonel prepared to march off his men.

And then a strange thing happened. The hound barked deeply.

"Wough! wough!" he said.

The battalion at once formed fours. They thought they recognised their master's voice.

OLD SCORES.

Before the war, when our sailors were on shore on leave in China and Japan, they used to meet a lot of German sailors in the different cafés they frequented. The following is reminiscent of that time.

Scene: Upper deck of man-of-war. Men employed carrying up 4.7 shell to be fused ready for action.

1ST A.B. (as he brings along a shell): "'Ere you are, 'Arry, there's one for the blooming Kaiser."

2ND A.B. (with another shell): "'Ere's one for Little Willie."

3RD A.B. (with another shell): "What about old Tirpitz? This one will do for 'im."

This continues for some time, until their stock of names runs out. Then 1st A.B. comes along with another shell, and putting it on the deck says:

"Oh, 'Arry, I nearly forgot. There! That one is for the bloke wot drunk my beer in China."

SCRAPS of PAPER

"O, what a tangled web we weave,
When first we practise to deceive!"

By
C. W. Shepherd.

I.

"There's more in that than meets the eye," said William Long, laying down the three-days-old newspaper on the tap-room table.

"More in wot?" queried Peter Bird, who had just entered The Harvesters' Arms.

William again took up the paper.

"A chap here," he said, "is advertisin' for a comfortable cottage in the country where he can have a room to hisself an' plenty o' good grub. 'Must be secluded,' it ses."

"H'm, nothin' very strange about that as I can see," commented Peter. "He might be a retired policeman, or a poet, or a——"

"—— or a swindler or a murderer," added William Long.

"Evil to him as evil thinks, is wot I say. Like as not the chap's as honest as you an' p'raps a bit more so."

"Well, if you are all that confident in him, why don't you write an' ask him to come to *your* house? You've took in lodgers afore, an' 'ere's a chance to take another."

"A good idea," replied Peter. "I'll talk to the missis about it. Lend me the paper, William, an' I'll take it an' write a letter to the chap at once askin' him if it is too late. I reckon you'll be sorry for your bad opinions when you see me gettin' I don't know how much a week from the chap wot wants a comferable 'ome."

Ten minutes later Peter was putting the matter before his wife.

"Liza," he said, when he had outlined the situation, "if we can't make a good thing out o' this, it's goin' to be a marvel to me. I don't quite know how, but it seems a good chance o' gettin' somebody to come an' work a little swindle on the village. We've got to get somebody to come an' stay with us—somebody wot's as artful as a fox in cold weather, an' wot's steeped in crime to the ends o' the 'airs o' his 'ead. Now, wot about your brother, Liza? Think he would come if there was a chance o' swindlin' one or two at the Harvesters' Arms?"

"There's one of our Joe's good points you've missed out," said Mrs. Bird, "and that's brains. If he can't twist it on somebody in Bagton here, I shall be surprised. He's a good 'un, is our Joe."

Next day a telegram was received by Peter's wife saying that her illustrious brother would arrive on the morrow. Telegrams came to Bagton with the frequency of eclipses visible at Greenwich. It was a fact that called for no comment, therefore, when, by evening, the whole village was aware of the phenomenon. In accordance with his custom,

Peter Bird dropped in at the Harvesters' Arms that night.

"We've 'eard o' your tallygram," was the chorus on his entrance. "Is the chap comin' or not?"

"He's comin' to-morrow," replied Peter, "an' that's all I know about him. I don't see as it matters much to you, though. I spects he won't bother himself wi' the likes o' one or two I could mention, such as William Long there. I shall tell him you are a man to beware of, William. You back hosses, that's wot *you* do, and a chap wot backs hosses is bad enough for anythin'. He'd steal flies from a blind spider."

William Long replied in terms which prompted the landlord to remind him that he was in a public-house and not in his own home. Quiet being restored, however, the evening passed with many speculations regarding the paying-guest and all that might be his.

II.

On the following afternoon there walked up the wide main street of Bagton village two men, apparently ignorant of the many eyes which peeped at them through closely-curtained windows. One of these men was a corpulent, red-faced individual, and the other, Peter Bird.

"Well, Liza," was the greeting of the newcomer when they arrived at Peter's house, "this is a smart idea of yours, and no mistake. For a week or two I may as well be payin' my lodging-money to you as to a skinny old landlady in London, so that neither of us can lose much, while we might stand to gain a bit. I made a nice penny on the Royal Stakes, so I can afford a little rest. What was it you said I'd got to be in the village, Peter?"

"A poet," said Peter. "It's the most 'armless thing I can think of. You don't look much like one, though. You'd better wear that soft hat you've just pulled out o' your bag."

"I'll see to that all right," said Mr. Wineglass, for such was the gentleman's name. "But how do you propose to work things? Have you got anybody in your mind who's to be the hobject of our attentions?"

"William Long," said Peter decisively. "He's the most cantankerous chap in this village. I'd rather take it out of him than out of any other man livin'. Never a night goes by, 'ardly, but wot he tries to take a rise out o' me somehow. Yus, it's William Long we've got to twist, but you're the man to say how it's to be done. You know more 'o the world than me. All I can tell you is that he's keen on hoss-racin', an' I've 'eard there's lots o' tricks connected with hoss-racin'. P'raps you'll be able to work one o' 'em on him. Oh, an' there's fishin'. William Long is terrible keen on fishin', but I don't 'spect that'll give you much 'elp."

"No, I can't say as it will," said Mr. Wineglass, "but I might manage to get him over horse-racing, and I've no doubt a hidea will occur to me durin' the evening. Meanwhile, don't you think you ought to take me into the Harvesters' Arms and introdooce me to some of the villagers?"

A little later Peter conducted his friend to the inn, where an expectant crowd had already assembled. They had not dreamt of seeing the paying-guest himself, but had merely hoped for details from the fortunate Peter. A deep silence prevailed as the pair entered the room, and Peter asked his companion what he would take to drink.

Mr. Wineglass drew himself up in a dignified manner as he replied:

> "I think I'll have a drop o' Scotch.
> You'll see me drink it if you watch."

This touch of the muse had its effect, and the word "poet" was passed round the room with bated breath. Then everyone awaited the next words of the oracle, which were quickly forthcoming.

"Gentlemen," proclaimed Mr. Wineglass, "it gives me much pleasure to be amongst you. As my friend, Tennyson, says:

> There's no one half so good, perhaps,
> As good old honest country chaps.

I have got tired of the hollow mockery of town life, and I've come among you to spend a few years in peace an' quietness. I'm glad to see you all enjoying your drop o' beer, for I'm sure you deserve it (*hear! hear!*). What I can't put up with, though, is bettin' on horses.

> Bettin' always is a curse;
> Makes men go from bad to worse.

Landlord, bring a gallon o' beer and divide it among my friends.

> Here's to beer;
> It brings good cheer."

The effect of this speech of Mr. Wineglass was very marked, and when, a little later, he and Peter rose to go, the former was the recipient of musical honours which might have been envied by a Primo of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.

"Wonderful chap," remarked William

"Gentlemen," proclaimed Mr. Wineglass, "it gives me much pleasure to be amongst you. As my friend, Tennyson, says: There's no one half so good, perhaps, As good old honest country chaps."

Long when they had gone. "He's the fust poet I've ever met. How he comes to think o' them rhymes I can't make out. I suppose it's a gift."

"Quite right, William," said George Rose. "He's a marvel. But wot did you think about his remarks on bettin'? Dropped it across you a bit, didn't he?"

William winked one eye almost imperceptibly. Then he leant across to George Rose and spoke to him in a whisper.

"Lie low an' say nothin', George. There's a game on. I can feel it in the air."

George Rose was not William's best friend for nothing, and he knew that William Long, wholesale poacher, was equal to any roguery that might be afloat. Accordingly he lay low and chortled inwardly.

Meanwhile Peter Bird and the poet were still without a definite plan.

"Hoss-racin's the only thing I can think of," Peter was saying as the pair walked home. "He's that keen on hosses that he'd jump at the chance o' doin' a bit with you. If you can only think of some way o' twistin' it on him over hosses it would be easy."

An hour later Mr. Wineglass gave Peter a slap on the back which sounded like the slamming of a door.

"I've got it!" he exclaimed.

"So have I," groaned Peter.

"I don't mean that," said the poet. "I mean I've got a hidea what's going to do for William Long. It's going to touch both his hobbies—betting and fishing."

Peter rallied at once.

"Listen," continued the wily one. "The village of Melton Dip is two miles up the river from Bagton here, so I believe, and the river banks are clear-cut sand. A piece of coloured paper put in the river at Melton Dip will come through Bagton, and if it's oiled well it won't come to any 'arm by getting wet. See my plan?"

Peter confessed that he was as yet as ignorant as the heathen.

"Well, listen agen," said Mr. Wineglass. "If I went fishin' with William Long some afternoon, and you went to Melton Dip it would be easy for you to put coloured papers

in the river so that they would pass by where me and William was fishing. I would paint the papers the night before, the same as certain jockeys' colours which I know quite well. I've got a pal who would send the afternoon's winners by wire as soon as the races were run. You'd get the wires at Melton Dip and then send the winning colours down the river. Now do you see?"

"Ah!" said Peter. "It's plain enough now, plain enough for anybody to see. But you'll have to go very careful. Better be a bit simple like and let him think you know nothin' about it."

"Trust your 'umble to do that. It's you what's got to be careful, so as not to mix the papers. Anyway, I'll see him in the morning and find out how the land lies."

Next morning Mr. Wineglass took a walk along the river bank where he heard that William Long was fishing.

"Good morning, Mr. Long," he said as he came up to him. "I see you are doing a bit of fishing. I'm fond of sport myself. As Longfellow says:

A brace of fish
Makes a tasty dish.

"I'll have to have an hour or two with you now and then. By the way, Mr. Long, somebody was telling me that you did a bit on horses at times. Is that so?"

William admitted that it was.

"Ah!" resumed Mr. Wineglass, "I wish I could do a bit too. You see, it doesn't look well for poets to bet; that's why I spoke as I did at The Harvesters' Arms last night. As a matter of fact, I used to put a bit on now and then myself, but I could never understand it and I never seemed to win anything. How do you know, now, which horse is going to win?"

William Long burst out laughing. The situation was developing.

"Why, mister, it's all a matter o' luck," he said. "If you and me had a noospaper here, with a list of hosses runnin' to-day, you would just pick out one you fancied, say 'Wildfire,' and then you'd say to me, 'I'll bet you 'alf-a-crown Wildfire wins.'

"O' course, it's too much to expect that you should spot the winner out of all the hosses runnin' in any particular race, so I should offer to give you five 'arf-crowns if you won, while I should only take one 'alf-crown off you if you lost. That's givin' you five to one. See?"

"I see," said the poet. "Is there any race on to-morrow afternoon?"

"I should just think there is," returned William, playing up skilfully to the poet's apparent ignorance. "Why, there's races almost every day of the week. I can get 'old of a noospaper, and if you like to come a-fishin' with me to-morrow afternoon we'll have a little flutter. Can you come?"

"Of course I can come," said Mr. Wineglass. "But you mustn't let Peter Bird know anything about it. It might get to London, and my reputation would be gone."

Ten minutes later he was writing to a jockey of his acquaintance, requesting him to telegraph to Melton Dip post-office the winner of each race on the following afternoon, as soon as it was run.

III.

It was unfortunate for Peter Bird that William Long had a little poaching affair on hand that night, since on his way to the scene of his activities William passed up the lane behind Peter's house at the quiet hour of midnight.

From the end of Peter's garden a light shone from the kitchen window.

"Time all honest folk was abed," muttered William as he paused at the garden hedge. A moment later he noticed with some satisfaction that there was a chink in the blind.

"Ah!" he murmured, "I'll just see as all's right at the Birds'. Happen the poet's been took ill!"

So saying he climbed stealthily over the fence and crept up to the window.

A strange sight met his eyes. Peter and the poet were busily engaged in preparing for the *débâcle* of William Long. Numerous pots of paint stood on the kitchen table, on which were littered a number of sheets of paper, while Mr. Wineglass, brush in hand, was hard at work painting the papers with different colours.

To William it was a mystery until he discovered that by raising himself on the window-ledge he could overhear snatches of conversation. William himself was the theme.

". . . It'll larn him," Peter was saying.

"It will that," agreed the poet. "Only don't you go and make a muddle of it. As soon as you get each telegram with a horse's name in it, look up the coloured paper bearing that horse's name, then shove it in the river and leave the rest to me."

"You must think I'm a bloomin' idiot," said Peter. "You've told me all about it at least six times. I never understood anythink plainer."

"No more did I!" chuckled William Long, as he tiptoed away from the window.

He visited George Rose early that morning.

"George, my lad," he said, "I told you there was a game on. I was right, and wot's more, I've spotted it."

"Now, all we've got to do," he went on, after describing the "game," "is to ketch them papers on their way down the river, and put others in their place. Do you think you could swim out an' change 'em, George, atween Melton Dip an' Bagton? Me and the poet chap will be fishin' together when the papers come down the river. He'll say to hisself, 'That's such-and-such a hoss; I'll back him,' which he does, an'——"

"Willum, Willum," broke in George Rose, "wot brains you've got for did-dlin' folks. You ought to have been a lawyer. I haven't done no swimmin' for many a long day, but I think I can manage that. And we are to go shares in the catch? Oh, Willum, Willum, wot a man you are. Let's go an' spend some of it now."

But William Long put business before pleasure, and pointed out that he had the coloured papers to prepare. Then, after making complete arrangements for the afternoon, he left George Rose in the height of glee.

"Why," said the landlord, "he's won the money right enough. The paper's here. Not one o' the hosses Mr. Wineglass backed yesterday has won a race." [Page 276, col. 2.]

IV.

On the afternoon when William Long and Mr. Wineglass had arranged to fish near Hopton, Peter Bird made his way surreptitiously to Melton Dip, carrying in his pockets the necessary coloured papers.

Presently he sauntered to the post-office. Was there a wire for him? he asked with an ill-assumed air of ease. A telegram was handed to him, and, placing it in his pocket, he made his way to the river.

The telegram gave the name of Samson as being that of the winning horse in the first race. Peter took from his pocket the bundle of papers dealing with the first race, and glanced at the names which Mr. Wineglass had written plainly on the sheets.

"Ah! here it is, this red an' black 'un," he remarked, as he separated it from the others. "Now I'll just bend the edges up a bit to make it swim better. Good-bye, old sport; give my respecks to Mr. Wineglass when you pass him."

The paper drifted rapidly down the river, mid-way between the clear-cut banks of sand. Peter watched it until it was out of sight. Then he lit his pipe, and sauntered back to the post-office to await the next piece of sporting intelligence.

An observer in an aeroplane might now have looked down upon the earth beneath and smiled, for he would have seen (*a*) Peter

Bird launching his coloured papers as results came to hand; (*b*) George Rose, minus his clothes, and seated on the river bank midway between the two villages, waiting to swim out and seize the papers as they passed and to put others in their places; and (*c*) Mr. Wineglass and William Long fishing together, each confident that he had snared the other in a net of many strands.

"I've got a bite!" exclaimed Mr. Wineglass, suddenly seizing his rod which was resting on the river bank. "No, it isn't, after all; it's only weeds, drat 'em!"

But Mr. Wineglass had seen all that he wished to see—the colour of the piece of paper floating down the stream—and, moreover, he had successfully diverted the attention of William Long.

"What was it we were saying just now?" he asked William when he had readjusted his rod. "Oh, about that first race this afternoon. I can't say that I fancy any of them names very much. Stay a bit, though, what's this one, 'Baby'? Why, I once wrote a poem called: 'Who Put Nails in Baby's Porridge?' Now, supposing I had half-a-sovereign on that one, how much should I get if he won?"

"I think I could manage to let you have three to one, although I think he's a very good hoss."

"Very well," agreed the poet, "and we will deposit our stakes with the landlord of The Harvesters' Arms this evening. He seems a decent sort of chap."

A little later Mr. Wineglass had another bite which coincided with the passing of a sheet of blue paper.

"Blue," he said to himself. "That will be Ajax." Then he turned to William Long.

"There's a horse here named Ajax," he said. "Do you think he is any good? Anyhow, I'll chance it. Yes, I'll have half-a-sovereign on him at the same price as Baby. I like this kind of betting. It's so much nicer than doing it through a bookkeeper—a bookmaker, I mean. Now, I wonder what horse will win the next race?"

And so the afternoon went on. Towards the end William Long seemed to grow suspicious.

"Look 'ere," he said. "It's very like you know more about this game than you purtend to. If all these are winners it's going to take me all my time to pay you. Poachers haven't got so much money as poets, you know."

Mr. Wineglass brought William to book with his own words, however, and reminded him that it was "just a matter o' luck." At the close of the afternoon they packed up their tackle and made their way to the Harvesters' Arms, where they found the landlord quite willing to hold their stakes and to take every care of the poet's reputation. The two sportsmen then went their respective ways.

There were nearly a dozen rustics in the Harvesters' Arms next day when Peter and the poet went to draw their money. It was hay-time, and hay-making is thirsty work.

"Well, lads," said Peter as he and Mr. Wineglass entered, "and wot would you all like to drink? Don't be afeard. Have wot you like. Landlord, fill up all round with the best."

"Ah! fill 'em up," said the poet:

> "A glass o' beer at middle day
> Is welcome when you're making hay."

The landlord was a business man. He filled the mugs and took Peter's money before beckoning the pair into the back parlour. Peter was the first to speak.

"Where's the money?" he asked.

"Why, William Long's had it o' course," said the landlord. "He was round here early this mornin' with a noospaper wot his little lad had fetched from Melton Dip."

"Wotever do you mean?" shouted Peter and the poet together.

"Why," said the landlord, "he's won the money right enough. The paper's here. Not one o' the hosses Mr. Wineglass backed yesterday has won a race. Anyhow, read it for yourselves."

Peter and his friend bent over the paper together. It was only too true. Mr. Wineglass had backed nothing but losers.

"We've been robbed," exclaimed Peter.

"We have," said the poet, "but how it's happened I can't make out. Let's go back to your house and talk it over."

But Mr. Wineglass went further than Peter's house. He was a wary man and he went back to London.

Peter Bird went to the Harvesters' Arms that night. William Long was there, too.

"Has the poet gone?" asked William as Peter entered.

Peter coloured slightly and admitted that the verse-purveyor was no longer in their midst.

"Ah!" said William, "he was a hartist, he was, not a poet. I shouldn't have knowed, though, if you had covered up the chink in your blind while he was paintin' them sheets o' paper. Landlord, bring Peter Bird a pint o' beer at my expense. Good 'ealth, Peter. 'Ere's better luck to the poet and yourself."

But Peter had gone.

The BIG GUNS of PING

"You may go where you please,
You may skid up the trees,
But you can't get away from the guns."

By E. A. Morphy.

I.

Mr. Yerb laughed tolerantly in the face of the frothing Sultan.

"Your Highness," said he, waving a hand in the direction of the cruiser that had caused the chief's displeasure, "may I implore you, in the flowery diction of the classics, to keep your royal hair on? The salute was not for me!"

The Western metaphor sounded portentous in Yerb's Malay. It silenced the lurid menaces of the potentate, but it failed to assuage his wrath.

"The honour was for the King, my master!" proceeded the American, in response to a grunt of interrogation. "He has got guns to burn, and he shoots them off until all is blue whenever the King of England or any British ship comes paying a visit to Uncle Sam or any of his dependencies. See?"

The Sultan grunted again.

The problem was wholly outside the pale of his philosophy, but it was unthinkable that so enlightened a ruler as the Sultan of Ping should be ignorant of any point of regal etiquette.

"Your Highness has not got a single gun that could say 'Bang' to a duck!" continued Mr. Yerb, with the inexorable logic of diplomacy. "The captain of that cruiser knows it. That was why he did not salute you. He is a perfect gent. He did not want to hurt your feelings by paying a compliment that a monarch with such sensitive feelings as your Highness could not instantly return in kind. I, being Consul for America, carry the King of America's flag—'Old Glory,' they call it—*Kamuliya-an Lama*."

Mr. Yerb repeated the name with unctuous obsequiousness in English and Malay, thus completing the bewilderment of the potentate.

"And 'Old Glory' spells guns wherever it flies," he added significantly, "and it gets them, too!"

Mr. Yerb paused dramatically.

The red betel juice dribbled down the Sultan's chin as his jaws relaxed in eager inquisitiveness.

Mr. Yerb looked round cautiously, then lowered his voice to a confidential whisper.

"Now, if only your Highness had a few guns!" said he. "If only your Highness could salute properly the ships of kings like mine, that are accustomed to being saluted!"

II.

Politically and strategically, the dominions of Ping stood in about as much need of artillery as they did of hippopotamuses. But, balancing that intangible circumstance, was the solid fact that a young and lusty Oriental power had recently subdued a great and puissant enemy, from whom it had taken, as spoils of war, a surfeit of obsolete guns and ammunition. These had been offered at gift prices to Mr. Yerb.

Mr. Yerb, apart from being the only white trader in Ping, was the duly accredited Consul there of various perspicacious governments who foresaw the possibility of some day having use for an official representative in that remote corner of Asia.

Hot on the heels of the proferred bargain, the fortuitous arrival of a British cruiser in the Ping Kuala gave Yerb the opportunity of a lifetime.

The comedy of an official visit, with its resultant courtesy of a consul's salute of seven guns, was sufficient to kindle in the Sultan's jealous breast a flame of unquenchable desire. The rest was pure salesmanship. The guns and ammunition that had been offered to Mr. Yerb as old junk, he unloaded—at manufacturers' list prices—on Ping.

Mr. Yerb's profits on this transaction outpaced all his most extravagant ambitions.

The contract provided for the payment of half the price in cash down, and the remainder by instalments as the work proceeded—the last dollar to be paid on the day that the last of the harbour defence batteries was installed and the testing charges fired.

No time was to be lost. None was. Guns and equipment, complete, were landed on the foreshore at Ping, only two days before the navigation was closed by the monsoon. It would be three months before another warship could cross the bar, and during those three months Yerb worked—and the men of Ping worked—with devilish and unnatural fervour.

Every instant of daylight saw Yerb on the works, directing the construction of platforms and embrasures, and the mounting of the heavy guns.

The Sultan chuckled as he noted the furious energy that the American imparted to the Chinese and Malay masons and craftsmen. It was uncanny, unoriental, but it was bringing him nearer the summit of his ambitions. He would salute and he would be saluted. The blue skies of Ping would reverberate with the roar of the salutations. The smoke from the great guns would dim the sun at noon. From all over the great waters, iron fireships would come and make their cannon bellow in his glory. The houris in Paradise would envy the fame of Ping.

Week by week, as the work proceeded, Yerb drew on the Sultan's Treasury for his pay. There was no attempt at dilatoriness or shilly-shallying. Ping knew Yerb as well as Yerb knew Ping. As long as the money flowed, Yerb worked like a Trojan. The instant the least shadow of a kink dimmed the brightness of the prearranged emoluments, Yerb stopped. In that respect he was inexorable.

The monsoon died away. Yerb seemed to go insane with haste. The Sultan was in ecstasies.

"Do not kill thyself, Tuan!" he begged the American. "It were a poor kindness to us all wert thou to kill thyself ere the guns are ready. *Jagah bai-bai*—oh, my friend! Have a care!"

And Yerb, while promising to *jagah bai-bai* and care for himself with meticulous assiduity, hustled harder than ever.

He could not explain conveniently to the dusky potentate that Britain looks askance at puny nations within her proper sphere of influence when they start fortifying with big guns harbours that an enemy might use in war-time. Neither could he disclose, either to his Highness himself or to any of his ministers, that the Sultan Ibrahim of Ping would have to enter into certain negotiations and representations with the Powers concerned before their warships would come clustering along the bar in a clamorous anxiety to salute him.

There was more than had ever yet entered Ibrahim's philosophy in this matter of salutes and saluting. Incidentally, there was more in the subject than even Yerb had reckoned upon. Yerb was the first to find it out.

One morning, through the pink fringe of the grey dawn to the northward, a rickety little steamer came sniffing her way.

Yerb watched her through weary eyes.

"Yep!" he muttered as she began warily to feel for the tortuous passage through the shallows to the bar. "Yep. She's coming here all right. Well, it will take her till to-morrow to get out, and then five days to Singapore. That's a week. It will take them another day or two to start thinking in Singapore, and a week before they'll have a cruiser up here. The next packet will have come and gone from Ping by then, and yours truly will be on his way home to little old New York!"

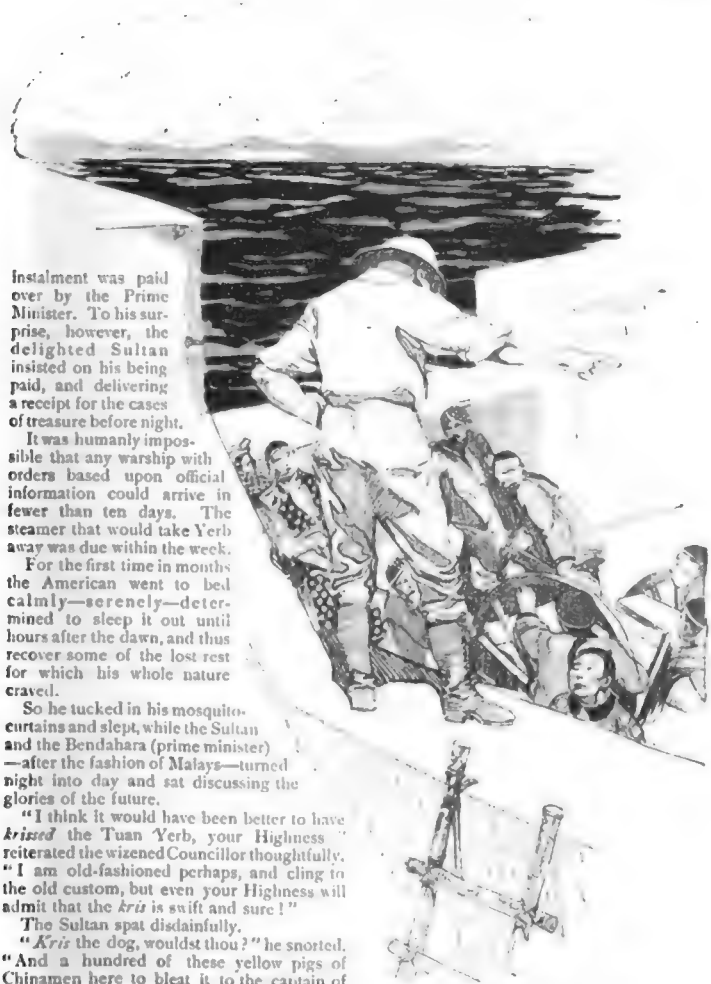
Next day, when the rusty old coaster chugged her way out across the bar, she carried a hundred and fifty thousand dollars in treasure. That sum represented but a tithe of Mr. Yerb's profits on the sale of the big guns to Ping.

III.

At last! At last!

The Sultan cackled with unctuous joy. Far away, near the rim of the ocean, fluffy white fountains spurted foaming from the blue, where the shells of the great guns burst under water, and shot mountains of froth into the sky. Ping rocked to the thunder of uncounted salvos. The echoes of battle rumbled over the hills inland—terrifying the forest folk—and out over the waves of the China Sea.

Mr. Yerb had not found any saluting ammunition among the second-hand war stores. It was impossible to fashion any with the resources of the Sultan's arsenal of spears and *krises*, and Mr. Yerb was too good a salesman to cry stinking fish over any of his own especial bargains. With solid shot, shrapnel, and common shell he kept firing all the day long. Even then he expected some cavilling and bargaining before the las-



Every instant of daylight saw Yerb on the works, directing the construction of platforms and embrasures, and the mounting of the heavy guns.

instalment was paid over by the Prime Minister. To his surprise, however, the delighted Sultan insisted on his being paid, and delivering a receipt for the cases of treasure before night.

It was humanly impossible that any warship with orders based upon official information could arrive in fewer than ten days. The steamer that would take Yerb away was due within the week.

For the first time in months the American went to bed calmly—serenely—determined to sleep it out until hours after the dawn, and thus recover some of the lost rest for which his whole nature craved.

So he tucked in his mosquito-curtains and slept, while the Sultan and the Bendahara (prime minister) —after the fashion of Malays—turned night into day and sat discussing the glories of the future.

"I think it would have been better to have *krissed* the Tuan Yerb, your Highness" reiterated the wizened Councillor thoughtfully. "I am old-fashioned perhaps, and cling to the old custom, but even your Highness will admit that the *kris* is swift and sure!"

The Sultan spat disdainfully.

"*Kris* the dog, wouldst thou?" he snorted. "And a hundred of these yellow pigs of Chinamen here to bleat it to the captain of the first ship that comes? There is no fool like an old fool! Thou art clever only where money is concerned, and thou hast no wits as regards the safe removal of Tuans."

The Bendahara sighed.

"Doubtless thou art right, Highness," said he. "But I am old fashioned. I still believe in the *kris*."

Yerb awoke earlier than he intended. He did not feel quite well. Something that he had eaten seemed to have disagreed with him, or, maybe, it was the reaction, after three months of strong excitement and fierce endeavour, that was beginning to set in.

Presently he began to feel the crampy qualms that every white man who lives long enough in the tropics learns to dread and avoid. He got out of bed and poured himself out a stiff dose of chlorodyne. "A stitch in time saves nine." He was not going to linger in Ping a day longer than was necessary, and he did not want to be a sick man.

The chlorodyne made him sleep, but it did not cure him. The symptoms were choleraic at times, at other times more like typhoid. Their calm persistence and increased torment began to alarm him. There was no doctor in Ping.

At evening his Malay "boy" approached him with a suggestion. There was a wise man—a *Pawang*—a sorcerer of sorts, who dwelt in the woods behind the town. Should he fetch him for the Tuan? The Pawang was a holy man, and skilled in the ailments of the country.

"Go!" said Yerb. "Fetch the Pawang if he will come."

Into Yerb's heart crept a ghastly fear. The look of hopeless alarm on the face of his servant deepened it. Sometimes in the Purple East, faithful servants know things about their masters that they dare not breathe even to themselves. If the Sultan had willed that the Tuan Yerb was to die, assuredly such was the decree of Heaven.

Yerb, in his weary mind, recapitulated his sufferings and his symptoms, and remembered that he had banquetted with the Sultan and the Bendahara in honour of the guns and the all-day salute.

Could it be? Yah!

Covering the joints of the bamboo are sheath-leaves of sorts that stick out like blades of grass. Underneath those leaves, clinging to the joint and stem, are tiny black specks, or spores, that might be mere atoms of dust.

But they are not mere atoms of dust.

Look at them under a microscope and you will see that each speck or spore is a tiny but atrociously-barbed dart or arrow—exquisitely sharp, and constructed something like the barbs of the squirrel-grass, so-called, that can work their way so irritatingly through clothes and skin. If a pinch of these little specks be mixed with a person's food they are swallowed unnoticed. They are quite tasteless.

When they reach the stomach, however, they begin to separate themselves from the edible and digestible host in which they were eaten. They are impervious to the action of the gastric-juices and other processes of digestion. Instead of being absorbed or voided, they start burrowing about among the intestines, tearing and inflaming them, piercing them incessantly and relentlessly, and eventually causing death. There is no process known to medical science by which they can be eliminated from the system. They are invariably lethal in their effect.

It was late night when the boy returned, his face mud-coloured with fear.

"The Pawang will not come, Tuan," said he.

Yerb marked the limp jaw and the wavering eye of the servant.

"Did he tell you why, Salleh?" he asked encouragingly. The gripes were tormenting him again.

"Nay, Tuan!" stammered the boy.

Yerb shook his head.

"That is not true, Salleh," said he reproachfully. "Tell me, did he tell thee that thy Tuan had been given the black seeds of the bamboo? Did he speak of poison—of——"

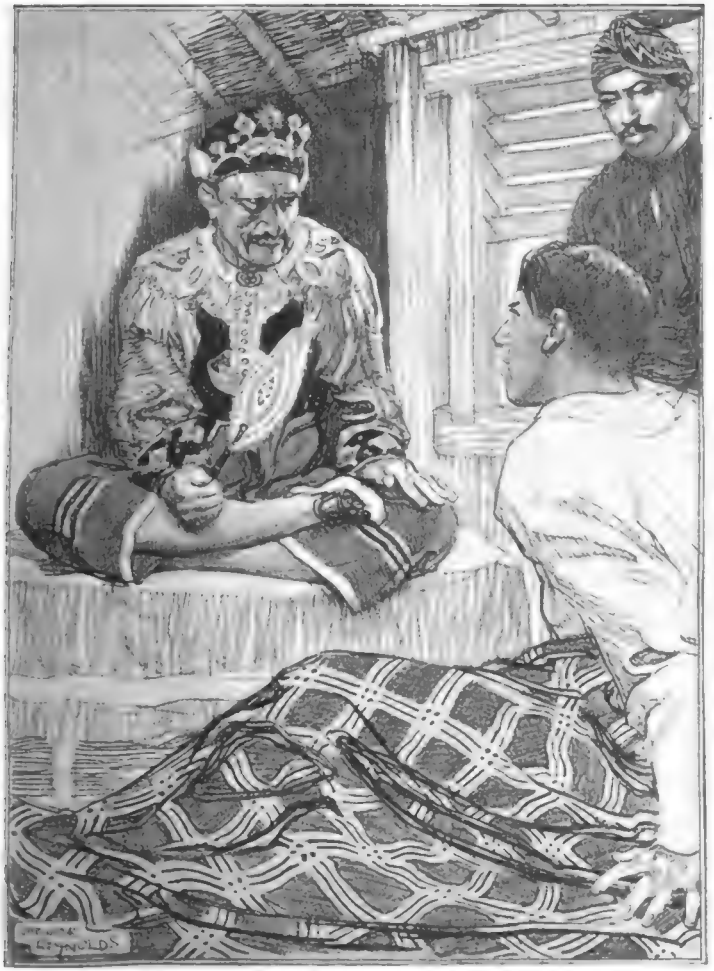
Malays of the poorer class make the most hopeless and incompetent of liars. It is impossible for them to conceal the truth under any sort of cross-examination. The moment Yerb mentioned the black bamboo seeds Salleh started weeping.

Then Yerb knew that the bargain of the big guns had been one too many for him. He had risked many deals in which his life was the only wager on his side. Now the element of chance existed no longer. He had gambled once too often with death. The dice were thrown. He had lost.

The pain gnawed at him horribly. Since he had realised what it really was, and the hopelessness of it, the agony seemed to get worse.

"Buck up, Salleh!" he ordered the boy. "I must write. Bring me a drink!"

Yerb sat down to his desk and mastered his pain with his will, and wrote a report of great length and fluency to the Consul-General of the United States at Singapore.



"You spawn of Satan!" gritted Yerb, in Malay, as the rodent barbs of the poison seized him with a new spasm. . . . . "Hand me back that letter, you murderer! Think you I will let it——" The Sultan bared his brown teeth in a snarl of laughter.

[Page 287, col. 2.]

In that report he pictured the Sultan Ibrahim of Ping as the monarch who promised in time to become the most enlightened native ruler in Asia, as he was, at the moment, the noblest, most open-hearted, and best. He recounted in glowing terms a fiction concerning an expedition alleged to have been sent by the Sultan to the frontier for the purpose of punishing marauding natives who had molested Chinamen who were British *protégés* from Hong Kong.

He also recounted a litany of apocryphal kindnesses wrought to him, as an American Consular official, by the Sultan, as ruler of Ping, and he besought the Consul-General to take such measures as would ensure the prompt dispatch to Ping of the first American warship or American squadron that happened to be passing through Singapore. He felt confident that the American Government would be only too delighted that one of its ships or squadrons should have the opportunity of paying a visit of honour and ceremony to his Highness the Sultan of Ping, and he assured the Consul-General that the officers of the visiting ship or squadron, as well as the Consul-General himself, should he elect to make the trip, would receive a memorable welcome from his Highness and his devoted subjects on the occasion of their advent at Ping.

A touch of exquisite pathos was added to the letter in the final paragraph, wherein Yerb, with dignified official courtesy, explained that he felt constrained thus to address himself to the Consul-General because he was suffering from what seemed to be a grave disorder of the choleraic type, and he desired the true facts, as well as his personal sentiments concerning the Sultan of Ping, to be properly recorded in case he should succumb to the malady.

Next day, with grave solicitude, the Sultan himself came to Yerb's bungalow by the seashore to inquire personally after the health of his American friend.

Yerb, though very ill, was sitting up to receive him.

"I am afraid I am in a bad way, your Highness," apologised the sick man, "and I only hope I won't die on your hands. But I guess the outlook is pretty rotten, so I have done my best to square up things for you with my Government, and get them to send a warship here to salute you as soon as they can jolly well find one!"

He smiled feebly and pointed to the bulky official letter in an unsealed envelope on the table. The Sultan sprang upon it like a tiger.

"Better send for the Bendahara's clerk to translate it for you, Highness!" muttered Yerb. "I'll listen and tell you if he translates correctly."

The clerk came and translated the document. Even the "official index words"—as Yerb declared the code-cipher words, inserted in the margin at the head of each paragraph, to be—were duly translated to the delighted potentate.

At the close of the perusal he leered mischievously at Yerb. The situation appealed to his naturally cruel and crafty nature. He had no more to fear from the American. Even the last instalment of a hundred thousand dollars, paid two days before, on the firing of the first salute, would be confiscated and returned to the royal coffers the instant Yerb's restless spirit deserted its tortured tenement.

"But surely the Tuan does not intend to die!" he smirked. Then, with a gleam of irrepressible triumph:

"If the Tuan goes, who will there be to share the salutes with Ibrahim? Eh, Tuan? Think of it! I, Ibrahim, will be left to take the thunder of the salutes entirely alone!"

The full truth of his tragedy began to blister the wearied mind of the American. The Sultan had been jealous of him. He had murdered him, not so much to save the last lakh of dollars as to monopolise for the future the salutes of whatever warships might penetrate the Kuala of Ping.

"You spawn of Satan!" gritted Yerb, in Malay, as the rodent barbs of the poison seized him with a new spasm. "You have murdered me for your filthy vanity! May dogs defile your grave and feed upon the bones of your children! Hand me back that letter, you murderer! Think you I will let it——"

The Sultan bared his brown teeth in a snarl of laughter.

"Ho! Ho!" he cackled to the clerk. "The Kaffir threatens the Sultan! Mark thou, Abdul Rahman, the Tuan is going mad in his illness! But keep thou this letter of his safely. See that it goes by the steamer to-morrow, and—yes, Abdul Rahman!"

The Sultan laughed again as he leered at the American with a mocking grin of triumph.

"Yes, Abdul Rahman! This Tuan is going mad in his illness, and must be protected against his own acts of insanity! See

that he writes no more, lest in his madness he commits to paper dreams that might harm others when he is dead. Watch him well!"

IV.

In stately sequence the four grey cruisers glided out of the haze of morning and drew up outside the white-crested billows that marked the bar across the Kuala of Ping.

"It is precisely as your poor friend, Yerb, stated," said the captain, as the party of white-clad officers and officials on the quarter-deck of H.M.S. *Insolent* watched through their glasses the feverish preparations for the reception of the squadron that were progressing in the town of Ping. "The beggars seem to be drawing up an army on the open ground, and the forts are full of guns and men!"

The grey-bearded American whom he addressed, nodded his satisfaction.

"Yes, sir," said he. "Mr. Yerb's cipher code words in the margin told us to read only every third line of his letter. He says that the Sultan Ibrahim having poisoned him, has gone absolutely mad with vanity, and expects to blow England off the face of the map. He has loaded every gun in his forts with shell or solid shot, and, as soon as a warship comes near enough, he will pretend to salute her, but will really sink her if he can."

The navigating-lieutenant, whispering to the commander at his side, ventured the opinion that in fifteen minutes' time, or less, the town of Ping would go up in smoke.

"I believe that the Yankee they murdered was an awful bounder," he added, "and sold these Ping blighters all the guns they've got. But it was clever and plucky of him to fix up that report and get the old Sultan to forward it when he knew he had got to croak. Look out! There she goes!"

Bravely booming from the hill battery, a dozen great guns belched flame and thunder seawards. Harmless but terrible, and far above the tops of the warships' masts and funnels, a dozen shells screeched through the sky and plunged into the distant waves.

The broad-shouldered English captain gasped at the affront. He felt as though a mudhopper had challenged the might of the world's greatest navy.

"Excuse me, sir!" he apologised courteously, as he turned away from the American Consul-General.

"I think perhaps we had better let 'em have it, Ingham!" said he to the Commander at his elbow. "If not——" his blue eyes twinkled behind their mask of official gravity as he spoke—— "if not, we'll have the beggars boarding us next!"

Boom! Boom! Boom!

Fresh salvoes of shell and solid shot—all pregnant with death and ignorance—tore over them, while roaring echoes tornadoed from all the batteries of Ping.

The Sultan, standing beside the Bendahara, on the rampart of the main fort, watched the effects of his hospitable demonstration upon the Englishmen, and wondered how soon they would begin returning his salute. He had no idea that salvoes from shotted guns—fired precisely as the dead American had shown his soldiers how to fire them—could be interpreted otherwise than as he intended they should be interpreted. How was he to infer that, by the one insignificant oversight of leaving the live shells in the cartridges, his effort to display his knowledge of international courtesies became an overt act of war?

On the *Padang*, or plain, below the fort, was drawn up as a guard of honour for the expected visitors, the entire army of Ping—two hundred and thirty-four rank and file—all uniformed and armed in proper European style by the late Mr. Yerb—and about forty generals and brigadiers, similarly clad and equipped.

"I suppose these are the ships of the Old Glory Flag that Yerb Tuan asked his friend to send," commented the Sultan to the old Bendahara. "I am very glad indeed that he is dead!"

The Bendahara glanced about uneasily, but attempted no reply. He still regretted that the American had been poisoned instead of *krissed*.

"The salutes are all for me, now!" persisted the ruler gloatingly. "I am the Sultan of Ping!"

He paused, silenced by the deafening roar of the second salvo. Then, again, he peered out expectantly at the squadron beyond the bar.

A beautifully simultaneous smother of cloud and thunder belched from turrets and casemates as the broadsides of the four cruisers spoke.

"Behold!" cried the Sultan proudly. "Behold, they salute me! I am the Sultan of Ping!"

A houri snatched the last three words from the lips of Ibrahim as the angel Azrael guided him through the gate of Paradise.

The big guns of Ping were dust.

: U 001 :

The Story of a Girl's Heroism.

By G. E. Mitton.

I.

The cold spray frilled along the jagged rock-edges and echoing caves of the coast of Cornwall not so many miles from the far-famed Lizard Point. They looked cold enough to set one's teeth on edge, especially seen against the electric-blue of the spring sky. Some of the cliffs were deadly black low down, but higher, just where the light from the sinking sun struck them full, they glowed with all imaginable colours, red, green, pink, and yellow.

As the sun drew near the horizon a great coldness fell on all things, and a girl who had been curled up snugly in a hollow of a great piece of detached rock on the beach, stirred and woke.

Lois Travers had come down to recruit after a long period of hard work, and had taken rooms in the tiny coast village away over the cliff. Being an inland dweller she had never thought of any danger from the tide, and, after having had lunch, had fallen asleep lulled by the splashing of the water and the wonderful freshness of the air.

Now she gave a long look out to sea, and her eye was caught by something flashing, bright as a diamond, on the crest of one of the big rollers. Then it disappeared, and though she watched intently she saw it no more, but in place of it appeared something like a vertical stick or rod which rose and fell. But she forgot all about it when she happened to look down and saw a surging tide of water already sweeping round the base of her rock.

It was impossible to regain the heights from the little cove she was in; to do that she must go on round the next headland and seek the crumbling cliff path by which she had come. Long before she reached the headland she saw that it was awash, but still she had an idea she could scramble round it, until she got close up to it and shrank back from such a feat.

The water boomed in incessantly, and though every few seconds it only washed at a depth of an inch or two in among the shattered stones at the base, yet the next wave seemed to hurl itself in with the force of tons and batter itself on the iron rock.

In sudden fear, Lois looked up at the stony walls that hemmed her in. No chance there. Still she could not believe herself to be in a desperate case. It is very difficult for a normally brought up girl to do so, for she has never met danger. Lois was the second of four sisters who lived with their widowed mother in a quiet little village in the Midlands. She was the clever one, the studious one of the family, and had long been expected to carve out a career for herself. She was in a fair way to do so, for she had attended technical classes in a neighbouring town, and had passed several examinations with success, so that the time was very near when she could begin real work which would earn independence.

When the great war broke out, convulsing nations, and changing the aspect of the world for most of us, it hardly affected Lois, who saw only through the glasses of her egotism.

"If you had been a boy, Lois," her mother had said, "you would have had to go into the Army," and the girl had answered carelessly:

"Good job I'm not; I should have missed the final exam., and I can't afford to lose a year."

She had perforce heard war news as the months rolled on, but the events might have taken place on another planet; they had no relation to her; her whole interests were centred on herself and her career, and she had no brother at the Front to bring the meaning home to her.

Underneath a pose of being strong and independent she was really nervous and highly-strung, and though she made a pretence of scoffing at demonstrative affection, she had, in reality, a feeling heart.

As she stumbled over the stony shore of the cove she remembered having seen the

("U 001" continued overleaf.)

mouth of a cave somewhere; if the worst came to the worst, and she was forced to remain here till the tide went down, she could probably find safety there.

She discovered the cave without much difficulty and examined it carefully. It was wide and high, like many Cornish caves, having a comparatively narrow slit for opening, and running far back into the rock. The sides were most irregular, broken into shelves and crevices, and great stones lay on the ground, worn and rounded with the flow of the water. Yet even a novice could see that the tide could not possibly reach up to the roof.

Lois climbed as high as she could, and finding a comparatively satisfactory shelf, spread her mackintosh upon it and lay down flat looking right out seaward through the mouth of the cave. Dreadful though the night would be, she was safe.

II.

Dusk fell, and with it came something soft and white, which ran up out of the darkness and spread itself on the sand, circling among the stones, and she gave a little shudder, for the sea had found her! In spite of common sense she was not quite without uneasiness lest by some miraculous chance the sea should swell until the whole cave was filled, and this thought pricked her continually and made her restless.

Long after she had eaten the remainder of her lunch complete darkness came on, and then she suddenly remembered she had with her a few cigarettes, brought more out of bravado and an assertion of independence than because she really liked them. She smoked a little, and while the red end glowed it was company, and it occupied her thoughts to see it brighten and wane.

Then she lay a long time when suddenly a great gush and gurgle creamed over and through the stones, and she sat up wide awake, and struck one of her few remaining matches to see what was happening. What she saw reassured her. The water was far below her refuge, but after that she kept striking a match every now and again until she had only two left. These must be reserved for a great emergency, she thought, little knowing what emergency it was that would call for them. She lay back and tried to sleep, but the noise of wind and waves prevented her.

They were grand, these voices of nature's force, and Lois had it in her to interpret them; but all the deeper instincts of her nature had been so overlaid with a packing of smug conceit and comfort that the stirring of them was as painful as the stir of hot blood in a limb that has been frozen.

All at once she began to sob gently, not for fear, but because grander and nobler things than she had ever known were entering into her vision. She thought of the men on the great ships watching and guarding the nation they belonged to without shirking or whining; she even gave a thought to the soldiers in the trenches, and imagined their discomforts and perils, for, aided by the thunder of the waves and the hardness and coldness of her couch, she began to get a glimmering of what they endured. If the waves were bursting bombs she might have had some reason to be afraid.

"Oh, what a beast I am!" she said suddenly to herself, and after that she fell into an uneasy sleep.

III.

All at once other sounds obtruding on those which had become deadened by repetition brought her back to consciousness—a squeaking and grating on the stones at the mouth of the cave, a jarring of some heavy body, then a faint glimmer of light, filling the sea-cavern and making the walls appear ghostly green. The girl sat up. Someone had come to look for her, of course! The landlady, anxious at her non-return, had sent round word that the young lady visitor was missing; men had remembered having seen her in the little bay earlier in the afternoon, and a boat had been launched to search the cave.

Lois was still of such vast importance to herself that all this perturbation on her account seemed only natural. She was just going to call out to the men and reassure them when she saw them splashing in through the entrance holding a lantern, the light from which fell only in front of them. There was something in their aspect and business-like advance that made her hesitate.

They put the half-dark lantern down carefully in a chink, and, proceeding to the further end of the cave, began to pitch aside sea-rubble and stones, and to drag out a number of dark, heavy-looking objects.

All that Lois had ever read of smugglers rushed into her mind. Were there still smugglers living? What did they smuggle? It was obvious now even to her that these men had not come as her saviours, yet the fact that they had got here, apparently without difficulty, made her feel safer. She

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would have to interrupt them in their work presently, and ask them to take her back.

The men made several journeys to and fro, carrying what looked like rectangular blocks in their hands as they splashed knee-deep through the water. Lois bided her time. She had no great curiosity as to what they were doing. It didn't concern her.

Then all at once the light fell full on one of the dark objects, and she recognised it instantly as a tin of petrol such as she had seen used for motor-cars. The following moment the bigger and burlier man of the two seized the lantern, and going to the mouth of the cave swung it round, bright side out, twice, and then hid it under his coat. From her shelf high up Lois could see clear away seaward, and as the light was doused she saw a tiny blue light like a sapphire burn for an instant and vanish out in the illimitable beyond.

Then she knew!

Trembling she hung forward, intensely and acutely alive; it was as if all her life up to that moment she had been asleep. Now without the slightest warning she had been caught up and hurled into the full current of the world and the war!

For the glittering sapphire flash that she had seen that moment belonged to a submarine, the same submarine whose periscope had flashed like a diamond that afternoon as it caught the sun's rays at a particular angle. A German submarine was lying off the coast secretly, and these two men were supplying her with the vital force she needed in order to fix her fangs into British ships!

Satisfied with the response to his signal, the bulkier man swung back into the cave and the light flashed round inside falling full on the white face of the girl who craned horrified over her rampart edge. There was a horrible oath. Hands of unimaginable strength clawed her down, splashed her into the water and shook her like a rat.

"Spying—goom—now we know it! Who put you up to it? Jim Watson? A gurl, too!"

Words, never very ready, failed the burly man. The other was of a different type; he was slim and young and might have been a clerk. To him Lois turned instinctively as being nearer to her in age and social standing, but she found it difficult to speak so chilled was she by the long waiting and the plunge into the icy water that swirled almost up to her waist.

"I wasn't spying," she stuttered with twitching lips. "I was caught by the tide and asleep."

The pair of traitors looked at each other.

Then far out at sea a red light showed twice, and they saw it beyond her.

"No time to stop. That's danger!" said the younger man. "Take her along and let's talk about it afterwards."

Rudely Lois was jolted into the boat and went swinging out to sea on the wet boards. The younger man sat nearer to her and jerked out questions at her as he rowed.

"What were we doing in there, do you know?" he asked.

"I thought you were smugglers at first," Lois stammered.

"And afterwards?"

Silence.

"Come, out with it; you're not a fool."

Still silence.

"She knows all right, Sol," he commented. And at that Sol let loose a flood of blasphemy which seemed to pour all over Lois and creep about her skin like vermin, though she understood not the half.

"We're in the soup if she opens her mouth," said Sol. "Chuck her overboard; that's all there is to it."

"It's her or us," he went on after a silence and finished with more hideous blasphemy.

There followed a terrible interval during which Lois clutched the boards and determined to scream loudly if they tried to tear her away, but no one touched her, and the boat continued to rise and fall over the long rollers coming in from the Atlantic.

"Best leave it to the captain of the submarine," said the young man at last thoughtfully; "he'll put her ashore somewhere a long way off maybe."

After that they ceased to take interest in her, having lost the whereabouts of the submarine. Lying on their oars, they peered this way and that in the thick darkness. Suddenly quite near them an electric light showed for a second, outlining something like the funnel of a steamer rising from a half submerged deck.

"Dangerous that," said the younger man. "The patrol boat's close around and going without lights too. Fools! They might have whistled instead."

Then they came alongside and the tins were handed up smartly while Lois crouched in the stern hoping to be overlooked. Sol took care she was not. He said something to the German commander and a scared exclamation came through the darkness, and the next moment a groping hand felt for Lois and with one pull jerked her up on to the slippery deck.

["U 001" continued overleaf.]

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But Baumgartner, the German commander, spoke perfect English and was unusually polite and tactful for his nation. He held in check all outward signs of the fury that lashed him at the presence of that contemptible thing, a woman, in the very midst of man's activities, and a woman, too, who dared to be a spy! He actually understood that it might be unpleasant for her compatriots if he dealt with her summarily and let go of her clinging icy hand so that she fell backwards into the black water, and he said quite courteously as he hauled her up:

"Madam, it is a necessity that you come with us. The predicament is unfortunate, but we will deal with you with all courtesy and put you ashore somewhere for your own safety as well as ours."

Lois believed him. She had no idea that he had thought of letting her go to her death there and then, and had swiftly measured the consequences, including the yell she might be expected to let forth, which would probably have brought down the patrol cruiser upon them. She let him lead her past the men who were bending down pouring the petrol from the tins into the tank and then heaving the empty tins overboard. Lois almost tumbled over them, and guided herself by touching their bent backs with her free hand.

Commander Baumgartner set her up with her back against the conning tower for the moment while he hurried up operations. Lois stood there, sliding and slipping and clutching at an iron bar, and a mighty idea was born in her brain.

Somewhere in the shroud of darkness—it might be very near—was one of the British ships with keen, determined men watching eagerly to catch this very submarine of whose presence they had probably got wind. If only somebody by some means could make a light or signal to them, the great ship could pounce before the submarine went under the water. Lois thought of that electric light, but it was far overhead in the top of the conning tower. Then suddenly she remembered. She had still two matches!

A match in itself was nothing; the poor little flame would never be seen, but Lois had washed her blouse in petrol and knew its dangerous properties. She was not quite sure if this was the same petrol, but she would have to risk that. If by any means she could throw a match into the petrol that the men were handling there in front of her, she would make a flame indeed, a beacon fire to warn every ship within miles! But that meant death, death for herself certainly, whether she succeeded or failed. That smooth-tongued German would see to that!

As she felt for the matchbox the sudden realisation of what she was going to do rushed over her, and she felt almost faint with fear, as a terrible struggle began in her. In the midst of it she seemed to hear a calm, strong voice speaking from out the depths. It told her she was just one unit, a small one, in the millions of her countrymen, past and present, that unless every one such unit did its utmost, the nation as a whole could never overcome the foe.

The girl's soul swelled; she thought of all the young men who had already gladly died, and who was she to hesitate? Singling one match, she struck too hard in her nervousness, and the head fell off; she did not know this, and thinking she had got it wrong end up, tried again without success.

She struck the other! There was a flare and sputter! None marked her, for their backs were toward her. Shielding the tiny light in her hand, she stepped forward, and with careful deliberation dropped the match into the very midst of the stooping crowd.

The effect was instantaneous. The match had fallen right into the mouth of the funnel through which the petrol was being poured into the tank.

A pillar of flame shot up to high heavens. Patches of fire sprang out all over Sol where his clothes were splashed with petrol; with a curse and a shriek he sprang backwards, stumbled, and went head-first into the sea.

Then all was dark again. But only for an instant, for there shot out of nowhere a ray of piercing white light, bathing the submarine in a brilliant radiance.

In that second, however, the remaining boatman had disappeared, the crew of the submarine had screwed down the tank-hole and stampeded for the conning-tower. Lois, who had instinctively leapt back to her position there, felt them brush past her, and when the light struck the boat she glanced up to catch sight of Baumgartner, the last to go, just disappearing into the funnel.

Had she failed?

No! There rang out a stunning noise. Submarine U 001 leapt once and was no more.

Lois had triumphed, and in triumphing had paid the full price, for when the cruiser presently steamed over to help any survivors none were to be found. All had perished utterly.

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MR. EDITOR —HIS PAGE.

Good Things in Store for You.

DON'T FORGET THE KIDDIES!

You haven't forgotten them, have you? Remember that Miss Phyllis Monkman, of the Alhambra Theatre, is appealing for the Fresh Air Fund this summer, and expects the ninepences simply to rain in. It is so very little the Fresh Air Fund asks from you—only ninepence—but that sum may spell a day's happiness to some city-bred child.

Won't you spare ninepence—or more—on buying about five pounds' worth of happiness for one of these little people?—though no terms of money can gauge the amount of joy they extract from their day among the flowers. Please do!

"LOVE LETTERS OF AN ACTRESS."

Everybody has heard of Elsie Janis, the wonderful young actress who came from the Land of Stars and Stripes to gladden the hearts of theatre-going London. Her performance in *The Passing Show of 1915* at the Palace Theatre is a delight to eye and ear alike, but Miss Janis is as versatile as she is charming, and not content with her stage successes, has also won renown with the pen. To the readers of THE ROYAL I commend her latest effort, "Love Letters of an Actress." In the August number you will find the first instalment of these delightful letters, and there are more to follow. Read them, I beg of you; they possess charm mingled with humour and commonsense, and that, alas! is a rare combination in love letters.

Photo *Fradelum & Hemfield.*

Miss Elsie Janis, who acts so charmingly at the Palace Theatre, and is the author of "Love Letters of an Actress," which start in the August number.

"THE TWO MAPS OF EUROPE."

There is no greater authority on the war than Mr. Hilaire Belloc, and his new book, "The Two Maps of Europe," will be appreciated by everyone who takes an intelligent interest in the war and all things connected with it. Mr. Belloc deals lucidly and comprehensively with several different aspects of warfare, such as the development of fortification, the relative value of numbers and supply in the strength of the army, and—a most important point!—the reliability of war news and how to sift it. He also gives a masterly reconstruction of the map of Europe from the point of view of Germany and of the Allies.

The book is published at the modest price of 1s. Ask your bookseller for it, or you can obtain it direct from 18 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, W.C., for 1s. 3d. post free.

JUST ONE THING MORE!

And that is a word about the new serial which is now appearing in that popular 1d. weekly, THE LADY'S COMPANION. When I tell you that the author is Miss Ethel M. Dell, who wrote "The Way of an Eagle," and many other splendid novels, you will decide it is well worth reading. And so it is! "The Rocks of Valpré" is one of the most charming love-stories ever written, and the heroine—but there, enough said! The story will hold you from start to finish. I can't say more, can I?

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